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THE

YOUNG PREACHER'S MANUAL,

OR A COLLECTION OF

TREATISES ON PREACHING;

COMPRISING

BROWN'S ADDRESS TO STUDENTS IN DIVINITY.
FENELON'S DIALOGUES ON THE ELOQUENCE OF THE PULPIT.
CLAUDE'S ESSAY ON THE COMPOSITION OF A SERMON, ABRIDGED.
GREGORY ON THE COMPOSITION AND DELIVERY OF A SERMON.
REYBAZ ON THE ART OF PREACHING.

WITH A LIST OF BOOKS.

SELECTED AND REVISED

BY EBENEZER PORTER, D. D.

BARTLET PROF. OF SACRED RHETORIC IN THEOL. SEM. ANDOVER.

BOSTON:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES EWER,

AND FOR SALE AT HIS BOOKSTORE NO. 51 CORNHILL.

1819.

FLAGG AND GOULD....PRINTERS.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

DISTRICT CLERK'S OFFICE.

BE it remembered, that on the fifteenth day of March, A. D. 1819, and in the forty third year of the independence of the United States of America, Charles Ewer, of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, viz.–" The Young Preacher's Manual, or a collection of Treatises on Preaching; comprising Brown's Address to Students in Divinity, Fenelon's Dialogues on the Eloquence of the Pulpit, Claude's Essay on the Composition of a Sermon, abridged, Gregory on the Composition and Delivery of a Sermon, Reybaz on the Art of Preaching. With a List of Books. Selected and revised by Ebenezer Porter, D. D. Bartlet Prof. of Sacred Rhetoric in the Theol. Sem. Andover." In conformity to the act of the congress of the United States of America entitled " An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and also to an act, entitled, " An act supplementary to an act, entitled, An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

J. W. DAVIS, { *Clerk of the district of Massachusetts.*

PREFACE.

THE work of the Christian preacher is doubtless the most important, that can be committed to human hands. But while the influence of the pulpit, upon the everlasting interests of men, is generally admitted to be a subject of the highest concern, the peculiar qualifications, which are requisite in the teachers of religion, seem to have been too much overlooked by writers of our times. The compiler of the YOUNG MINISTER'S COMPANION, which was published a few years ago, performed an invaluable service for the church. The heavy sale of that book is to be accounted for, only on the supposition that our rising clergy are unacquainted with the excellence of its contents. But, though the principal treatises of that compilation, are perhaps the best that were ever written, on the subjects which they discuss; their chief design is to form the character of the Christian minister, and to exhibit the principles by which he ought to be governed. Still, something corresponding with the above compilation, in its general character, but relating directly to the duties of the pulpit, was much needed. Some of the best treatises on

preaching can hardly be obtained of booksellers, and others are to be found only in connexion with expensive works. A collection of these treatises, in a cheap and convenient form, must be an important acquisition to every theological student. To furnish such a collection, is the design of the YOUNG PREACHER'S MANUAL.

The excellent John Newton has well remarked, that "a preacher is not to be made, as a mechanic makes a table or a chair." His heart must be formed by divine grace. So far, however, as intellectual qualifications are concerned, they must be cultivated, as in other human attainments, by study, and a practical application of the best rules of instruction. Rules on preaching cannot make a preacher: nor can EUCLID'S ELEMENTS make a mathematician. But skill in any art or science presupposes acquaintance with its elementary principles. Knowledge of the Bible, and of systematic Theology, is essential to the Christian Teacher, but this is not sufficient. He may possess this, and yet not be qualified to write or speak his own thoughts in a perspicuous and interesting manner. "A man may be a good *lawyer*, and yet a bad *pleader*; so he may be a good *divine*, and yet a very indifferent *preacher*."

The Compiler of this MANUAL hopes that it may render some important aid to the student, in his preparation for the sacred office.

The ADDRESS TO STUDENTS IN DIVINITY was written by the REV. JOHN BROWN of HADDINGTON, whose character as a minister of the gospel is well known in this country.

The DIALOGUES ON ELOQUENCE are from the pen of FENELON, in whom the taste of a fine scholar was united with the piety of a fervent Christian. DR. DODDRIDGE speaking of this work of the Archbishop, calls it, "his *incomparable dialogues on eloquence*, which, (he says) may God put it into the hearts of our preachers often and attentively to read."

FORDYCE, in his *art of preaching*, says; "If you want to see the whole machinery and apparatus of pulpit eloquence displayed, in the completest manner, I refer you to the great and good Prelate of CAMBRAY'S DIALOGUES on that subject; who was himself the justest critic, and one of the best models of eloquence, that I know." And DR. WILLIAMS, speaking of this work, says, it is "deservedly mentioned, by many writers of eminence, with a sort of respect, bordering on veneration."

The ESSAY ON THE COMPOSITION OF A SERMON, was written by the REV. JOHN CLAUDE, a minister of the Reformed French church. ROBINSON'S translation of it is accompanied with cumbersome, and, to a great extent, illjudged notes, making two volumes, octavo. It can scarcely be obtained in this country, except in connexion with SIMEON'S SKELETONS, in five volumes, a work, which very few ministers can afford, or would wish to purchase. It is here given in a form, which the compiler thinks preferable to that of SIMEON or WILLIAMS.

In this Essay, and in the two following articles, (though they are by no means to be regarded as perfect,) the judicious student will find many valuable

thoughts on preaching, and more, it is presumed, than can be found elsewhere, in the same number of pages.

It is only necessary, further to apprize the reader, that the *marginal notes*, in FENELON'S *dialogues*, selected from other writers, generally confirming, but sometimes invalidating the opinions of that celebrated author, are designed to furnish a more ample view of the several topics discussed, than is contained in the original work.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
ANDOVER, MARCH, 17, 1819.

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ADDRESS

TO

STUDENTS OF DIVINITY.

MY DEAR PUPILS,

WHILE I have been occupied in instructing you, your consciences must bear me witness, that my principal concern was to impress your minds with the great things of God. Now, when I am gradually stepping into the eternal state, to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, permit me to beseech you, as you wish to promote his honour, and the eternal salvation of your own and your hearer's souls,

1. See, that ye be REAL CHRISTIANS yourselves. I now more and more see, that nothing less than REAL, REAL Christianity, is fit to die with, and make an appearance before God. Are ye then indeed "born again, born from above, born of the spirit? created in Christ Jesus unto good works? new creatures in Christ Jesus," having "all old things passed away, and all things become new?" Are ye indeed the circumcision which "worship God in the spirit," habitually reading, meditating, pray-

ing, preaching, conversing with your hearts, under the influence of the Holy Ghost? Have you no "confidence in the flesh," no confidence in your self-righteousness, your learning, your address, your care and diligence, your gifts and graces; but being emptied of self in every form, are you "poor in spirit, less than the least of all saints," and the least of all God's mercies; nay, the very "chief of sinners" in your own sight? Has it pleased God "to reveal his Son in" you? and to instruct you with a strong hand, "to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ as your Lord, and to count them but dung, that you may win him, and be found in him, not having your own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith, and to know the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus?" If you be, or become, *graceless* preachers or ministers of the gospel, how terrible is your condition! If you open your Bible, the sentence of your redoubled damnation flashes into your conscience from every page. When you compose your sermon, you but draw up a tremendous indictment against yourselves. If you argue against, or reprove other men's sins, you but aggravate your own. When you publish the holy law of God, you but add to your rebellion against it, and make it an awful witness against your treacherous dissimulation. If you announce its threatenings, and mention *hell*, with all its insupportable torments, you but involve yourselves in it, and make yourselves heirs to it as the inheritance appointed you by the Almighty. When you speak of Christ and his excellencies, fulness, love, and labours, it is but to trample him under your feet. If you take his covenant and

gospel into your mouth, it is but to profane them, and cast them forth to be trodden under foot of men. If you talk of spiritual experiences, you but do despite to the Spirit of grace. When you commend the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and invite sinners to new-covenant fellowship with them, you but treacherously stab them under the fifth rib, betray them with a kiss, and from your heart cry, This is the heir, the God, come let us kill him. While you hold up the glass of God's law or gospel to others, you turn its back to yourselves. The gospel, which ye preach to others, is hid, is a savour of death unto death to you, the vail remaining on your hearts, and the god of this world having blinded your minds. Without the saving, the heart-transforming knowledge of Christ and him crucified, all your knowledge is but an accursed *puffer up*, and the murderer of your own souls. And unless the grace of God make an uncommon stretch to save you, how desperate is your condition! Perhaps no person under heaven bids more unlikely to be saved, than a *graceless minister;* his conscience is so overcharged with guilt, so seared as with an hot iron, and his heart so hardened by the abuse of the gospel. Alas! my dear pupils, must all my instructions, all the strivings of the Holy Ghost, all your reading, all your meditations, all your sermons, all your evangelical principles, all your profession, all your prayers, as traps and snares, take and bind any of you, hand and foot, that, as "unprofitable servants, you" may be cast into "outer darkness," with all the contents of your Bible and other books, all your gifts and apparent-like graces, as it were, inlaid in your consciences, that, like fuel or oil, they may for ever feed the flames of God's wrath upon your souls! After be-

ing set for a time at the gate of heaven, to point others into it, after prophesying in Christ's name, and wasting yourselves to show others the way of salvation, and to light up the friends of our Redeemer to their heavenly rest, must your own lamp go out in everlasting darkness, and ye be bidden, "Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity?" Must I—must all the churches behold you at last brought forth and condemned as arch-traitors to our Redeemer? Must you, in the most tremendous manner, for ever sink into the bottomless pit, under the weight of the blood of the great God, our Saviour; under the weight of murdered truths, murdered convictions, murdered gifts, murdered ministrations of the gospel, and murdered souls of men!

2. Ponder much, as before God, what proper FURNITURE you have for the ministerial work, and labour to increase it. To him that hath shall be given. Has Jesus bestowed on you the Holy Ghost? What distinct knowledge have you of the mysteries of the kingdom? What aptness have you to teach, bringing out of the good treasure of your own heart "things new and old?" What ability to make the deep mysteries of the gospel plain to persons of weak capacities, and to represent things delightful or terrible in a proper and affecting manner? What proper quickness in conceiving divine things; and what rooted inclination to study them, as persons devoted to matters of infinite importance? What peculiar fitness have you for the pulpit, qualifying you, in a plain, serious, orderly, and earnest manner, to screw the truths of God into the consciences of your hearers? With what stock of self-experienced truths and texts of inspiration did, or do you enter on the ministerial work? Of what truths, relative to the law of

God; or relative to sin, Satan, or the desertions and terrors of God, has your soul not only seen the evidence, but felt the power? What declarations, promises, offers, and invitations, of the glorious gospel, have ye, with joy and rejoicing of heart, found and eaten, and therein tasted and seen that God is good? Of what inspired truths and texts can you say, "Even so we have believed, and therefore we speak:" what we have seen and heard with the Father, and tasted and handled of the word of life, that we declare unto you. Thrice happy preacher, whose deeply-experienced heart is, next to his Bible, his principal note-book!

3. Take heed that your CALL from Christ and his Spirit to your ministerial work be not only REAL, but EVIDENT. Without this you can neither be duly excited nor encouraged to your work; nor hope, nor pray for divine success in it; nor bear up aright under the difficulties you must encounter, if you attempt to be faithful. If you run unsent by Jesus Christ and his Spirit, notwithstanding the utmost external regularity in your license, call, and ordination, you, in the whole of your ministrations, must act the part of a sacrilegious thief and robber, a pretended and treacherous ambassador for Christ and his Father, and a murderer of men's souls, not profiting them at all. What direction—what support—what assistance—what encouragement—what reward, can you then expect? Ponder, therefore, as before God: Have you taken this honour to yourselves? or, Were ye called of God, as was Aaron? Has Jesus Christ sent you to preach the gospel, and laid upon you a delightful and awful necessity to preach it? While he powerfully determined you to follow providence, and avoid every selfish and irregular step towards entrance

into the office, as a mean of eating a piece of bread, or enjoying carnal ease or honour, did he breathe on you, and cause you to receive the Holy Ghost; filling you with deep compassion to the perishing souls of men, and a deep sense of your own unfitness for such arduous work, and fervent desire, that if the Lord were willing to use you as instruments of winning souls, he would sanctify you, and make you meet for his work? Perhaps, providentially shut out from other callings, to which you or your parents inclined, did you, in your education, go up "bound in the Spirit" by the love of Christ burning in your hearts, and constraining you cheerfully to surrender yourselves to poverty, reproach, and hatred of men, for promoting his name and honour, and the salvation of men in the world? What oracles of God, powerfully impressed on your soul, have directed and encouraged you to his work? Know you in what form Jesus Christ gave you your commission? Whether to "open the eyes of the Gentiles, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith" in him:—Or to "go make the heart of this people fat, their ears heavy," and to "shut their eyes?"

4. See that your END in entering into, or executing your office, be single, and disinterested. Dare you appeal to Him, whose eyes are "as a flame of fire," and who "searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins," to give to every man according to his works, that you never inclined to be put into the priest's office, that you might "eat a piece of bread, and look every one for his gain from his quarter;" that ye "seek not great things for yourselves;" that ye "covet no man's silver, gold," or

"apparel;" that ye seek not men's property, but "themselves, that you may win them to Christ for their eternal welfare;" that ye seek not your own honour, ease, or temporal advantage, but the things of Christ and his people; that ye "seek not honour" or "glory of men," but the honour of Christ and his Father, in the eternal salvation of souls; and have determined to prosecute this end through whatever distress or danger the Lord may be pleased to lay in your way?

5. See that your minds be deeply impressed with the NATURE, EXTENT, and IMPORTANCE of your ministerial work; that therein it is required of you, as "ambassadors for Christ," as "stewards" of the mysteries and manifold grace of God—"to be faithful;" to serve the Lord with your spirit, and with much humility in the gospel of his Son; to testify repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, not keeping back, or shunning to declare every part of the counsel of God, or any profitable instruction, reproof, or encouragement; and, not moved with any reproach, persecution, hunger, or nakedness; to be ready, not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, in order to finish your course with joy. Bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and striving together in prayer, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, and your messages provided by God, and made acceptable to your hearers, you must labour with much fear and trembling, determined to know, to glory in, and make known, nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified; preaching the gospel, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom," as men pleasers, but with great plainness of speech, in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power; speaking the things which are freely

given you by God, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but in "words which the Holy Ghost teaches;" comparing spiritual things with spiritual, as having the mind of Christ, always triumphing in HIM, and making manifest the savour of the knowledge of him in every place, that you may be a sweet savour of Christ in them who are saved, and in them who perish; as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God speaking in Christ, and through the mercy of God, not fainting, but renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God, deceitfully, or corrupting the truth, but manifesting the truth to every man's conscience, as in the sight of God; not preaching yourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and yourselves servants to the church for his sake, alway bearing about his dying, that his life may be manifested in you; and knowing the terror of the Lord, and deeply impressed with the account, which you and your hearers must give to him of your whole conduct in the day of judgment, awed by his infinite authority, constrained and inflamed by his love, you must persuade men, beseeching them to be reconciled unto God, and making yourselves manifest to God, and to their conscience; and, as their edification requires, changing your voice, and turning yourselves every way, and becoming all things to all men, in order to gain them to Christ; jealous over them with a godly jealousy, in order to espouse them to him, as chaste virgins, travelling in birth, till he be formed in their hearts. You must take heed to your ministry, which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfil it; stir up the gifts, which were given you; give yourselves wholly to reading, exhortation, and doctrine; and perseveringly take heed to yourselves, and to the doc-

trine which you preach, that you may save yourselves, and them that hear you; watching for their souls, as they who do and must give an account for them to God; rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving every man his portion in due season; faithfully warning every man with tears, night and day, teaching every man, particularly young ones, and labouring to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; and warring, not after the flesh, nor with carnal weapons, but with such as are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, and casting down imaginations, and subduing every thought and affection to the obedience of Christ. Having him for the end of your conversation, and holding fast the form of sound words in faith, and in love to him, not entangling yourselves with the affairs of this life, nor ashamed of the Lord or of his cause or prisoners, but ready to endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and to endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain salvation with eternal glory; ye must go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach, and, exposed as spectacles of sufferings to angels and men; must not faint under your tribulations, but feed the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood, and over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers; preaching the word in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with all long-suffering and doctrine; taking the oversight of your people, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre of worldly gain, or larger stipends, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock, exercising yourselves to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man; having a good conscience, willing in all things to live honestly, exer-

cised to godliness, kindly affectioned, disinterested, holy, just, and unblameable, prudent examples of the believers in conversation, in charity, in faith and purity, fleeing youthful lusts, and following after righteousness, peace, faith, charity; not striving, but being gentle unto all men; in meekness, instructing them who oppose themselves; avoiding foolish and unlearned questions, and old wives fables, fleeing from perverse disputings and worldly mindedness, as most dangerous snares; and following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness; fighting the good fight of faith, and laying hold on eternal life; keeping your trust of gospel truth and ministerial office, and without partiality or precipitancy, committing the same to faithful men, who may be able to teach others; and, in fine, faithfully labouring, in the Lord, to try, and confute, and censure false teachers; publicly rebuke or excommunicate open transgressors, restore such as have been overtaken in a fault in the spirit of meekness, and having compassion on them, to pull them out of the fire, having even the garment spotted by the flesh, and never conniving at, or partaking with any in their sins. Who is sufficient for these things? May your sufficiency be of God; and as your days are, so may your strength be.

6. See that ye take heed to your spirits, that ye deal not TREACHEROUSLY with the Lord. In approaching to, or executing the ministerial office, keep your hearts with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of eternal life, or death to yourselves and others. Building up yourselves in your most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. If you do not ardently love Christ, how can you faith-

fully and diligently feed his lambs—his sheep? Alas! how many precious sermons, exhortations, and instructions are quite marred and poisoned by coming through the cold, carnal, and careless heart of the preacher, and being attended with his imprudent, untender, and lukewarm life? If you have not a deep-felt experience of the terrors of the Lord, of the bitterness of sin, vanity of this world, and importance of eternity, and of the conscience-quieting and heart-captivating virtue of Jesus' bleeding love, how can you be duly serious and hearty in preaching the gospel? If, all influenced by a predominate love to Christ, your heart be not fixed on everlasting things, and powerfully animated to an eager following of peace and holiness, how can you, without the most abominable treachery, declare to men their chief happiness, and the true method of obtaining it? If your graces be not kept lively, your loins girt, and your lamps burning, all enkindled by the heart-constraining love of Christ, how cold, how carnal, and blasted must your sacred ministrations be? If your work, as ambassadors of Christ, be to transact matters of everlasting importance between an infinite God and immortal, but perishing, souls of men; if the honours and privileges of it be so invaluable, what inexpressible need have you of habitual dependence on Christ by a lively faith? What self-denial, what ardent love to Christ and his Father, what disinterested regard to his honour, what compassion to souls, what prudence, what faithfulness and diligence, what humility and holy zeal, what spirituality of mind and conversation, what order, what plainness, what fervour, what just temperature of mildness and severity, is necessary in every part of it! If, while you minister in holy things, your lusts prevail and

are indulged, you have less of real or lively Christianity than the most weak and uncircumspect saints under your charge; if your evil heart of unbelief fearfully carry you off from the living God, and you can live unconcerned while the powerful and sanctifying presence of God is with-held from yourselves or your flocks; how sad is your and their case! If your indwelling pride be allowed to choose your company, your dress, your victuals, nay, your text, your subject, your order, your language; if it be allowed to indite your thoughts, and, to the reproach and blasting of the gospel of Christ, to deck your sermon with tawdry ornaments and fancies, as if it were a stage-play; to blunt and muffle up his sharp arrows with silken smoothness and swollen bombast; if it be allowed to kindle your fervour, and form your looks, your tone, your action; or to render you enraptured or self-conceited, because of subsequent applause; or sad and provoked, because your labours are contemned, how dreadful is your danger and that of your hearers! How can ministerial labours, originating in pride, spurred on by the fame of learning, diligence, or holiness, hurt the interests of Satan, from whose influence they proceed. If pride be allowed to cause you to envy or wound the characters of such as differ from, or outshine you, or to make you reluctant to Christian reproof from your inferiors, how fearful is your guilt and danger! Pride indulged is no more consistent with a Christian character, than drunkenness and whoredom. If you take up or cleave to any principle or practice in religion, in the way of factious contention, how abominable to God is the "sower of discord among brethren!" If you undervalue the peace and prosperity of the Church of Christ, and are not afflicted with her in all

her afflictions, how cruel and unchrist-like your conduct! If, in justly proving your opponents deceivers and blasphemers, you, by your angry manner, plead the cause of the devil, will God accept it as an offering at your hands? If you are slothful in studying or declaring the truths of Christ; if, to save labour or expense, you are inactive or averse to help such as have no fixed ministrations, or to contrive or prosecute projects for advancing the kingdom of Christ, and promoting the salvation of men, how great is your baseness, how dreadful your hazard? Think, as before God, did Jesus Christ furnish you for, and put you into the ministry, that you might idle away, or prostitute your devoted time, tear his church, conceal or mangle his truths, betray his interests, or starve and murder the souls of men? Are not your people the "flock of God, which he purchased with his own blood?" Will you then dare to destroy his peculiar property and portion, and attempt to frustrate the end of his death? Did Jesus die for men's souls? And will you grudge a small labour or expense to promote his honour in their eternal salvation? If the Son of God was crucified for men, crucified for you, will you refuse, through his Spirit, to crucify your selfishness, your pride, your sloth, your worldly and covetous disposition, in order to save yourselves, and them that hear you. While your own salvation, and the salvation of multitudes, are so deeply connected with your faithfulness and diligence, while the powers of hell and earth so set themselves in opposition to your work, that, in your falls, they may triumph over Christ, your Master, and his church; while so many eyes of God, angels, and men are upon you, why do you ever think or speak of eternal things, of heaven and hell, of Jesus' person,

offices, righteousness, love, and free salvation, without the most serious and deep impression of their importance? While perhaps you preach your last sermon, and have before you and on every hand of you, hundreds or scores of perishing souls, suspended over hell by the frail thread of mortal life, not knowing what a day or an hour may bring forth; souls already in the hands of the devil, and, as it were, just departing to be with him in the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone; souls already slain by the gospel of our salvation blasted and cursed to them, partly by your means, why do not tears of deep concern mingle themselves with every point you study, every sentence you publish in the name of Christ? When multitudes of your hearers, some of them never to hear you more, and just leaping off into the depths of hell, are, in respect of their needs, crying with an exceeding bitter cry, *Minister, help, help, we perish, we utterly perish, pluck the brand out of the burning fiery furnace;* why spend your devoted time in idle visits, unedifying converse, useless reading, or unnecessary sleep? What, if while you are so employed, some of your hearers drop into eternal flames, and begin their everlasting cursing of you for not doing more to promote their salvation? When Jesus arises to require their blood at your hand, how accursed will that knowledge appear, which was not improved for his honour who bestowed it! that ease, which issued in the damnation of multitudes! that conformity to the world which permitted, or that unedifying converse which encouraged your hearers to sleep into hell in their sins! that pride or luxury, which restrained your charity, or disgracefully plunged you into debt! Since, my dear pupils, all the truths of God, all the ordinances and privileges of his

church, the eternal salvation of multitudes, and the infinitely precious honour of Jesus Christ and his Father, as connected with the present and future ages of time, are intrusted to you, how necessary, that, like Jesus, your Master, you should be faithful in all things to him who appointed you? If you do the work of our Lord deceitfully, in what tremendous manner shall your parents, who devoted and educated you for it; your teachers, who prepared you for it; the seminaries of learning, in which you received your instruction; the years, which you spent in your studies; all the gifts which were bestowed upon you; all the thoughts, words, and works of God in the redemption of men; all the oracles, commands, promises, and threatenings of God, which direct, inculcate, or enforce your duty; all the examples of Jesus Christ, and all his apostles, prophets, and faithful ministers; all the leaves of your Bible, all the books of your closet, all the engagements you have come under, all the sermons which you preach, all the instructions, which you tender to others, all the discipline, which you exercise, all the maintenance, which you receive, all the honours, which you enjoy or expect; all the testimonies, which you give against the negligence of parents, masters, ministers, or magistrates; all the vows and resolutions, which you have made to reform, and all the prayers, which you have presented to God for assistance or success, rise up against you as witnesses, in the day of the Lord!

7. See that ye, as workmen, who need not be ashamed, earnestly labour RIGHTLY TO DIVIDE the word of truth, according to the capacities, necessities, and particular occasions of your hearers, giving every one of them their portion in due season. Never make your own ease,

your inclination or honour, but the need of souls, and the glory of Christ, the regulator in your choice of subjects. Labour chiefly on the principal points of religion, to bring down the fundamental mysteries of the gospel to the capacities of your hearers, and inculcate on their consciences the great points of union to and fellowship with Christ, regeneration, justification, and sanctification, these will require all your grace, learning, and labour. Never aim at tickling the ears or pleasing the fancies of your hearers; but at convincing their consciences, enlightening their minds, attracting their affections, and renewing their wills; that they may be persuaded and enabled to embrace and improve Jesus Christ, as freely offered to them in the gospel, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Labour to preach the law as a broken covenant, the gospel of salvation, and the law as a rule of life, not only in their extensive matter, but also in their proper order and connexion. It is only when they are properly connected, that the precious truths of God appear in their true lustre and glory. It is at your infinite hazard, and the infinite hazard of them that hear you, if you, even by negligence, either blend or put asunder that law and gospel, which Jesus Christ has so delightfully joined together. No where is it more necessary to take heed, than in preaching up the duties of holiness. Let all be founded in union to and communion with Christ, all enforced by the pattern, love, righteousness, and benefits of Christ.

8. You have stated yourselves public witnesses for Jesus Christ, who profess to adhere to, and propagate his injured truths, and to commemorate with thankfulness the remarkable mercies, which he has bestowed on our church and nation, and to testify against, and mourn

over our own and our father's fearful backslidings from that covenanted work of reformation once attained in our land. See that ye be judicious, upright, constant, and faithful in your profession. I now approach death, heartily satisfied with our excellent Westminister *Confession of Faith*, *Catechisms*, and *Form of church-government*, and cordially adhering to these *Covenants*, by which our fathers solemnly bound themselves and their posterity to profess the doctrines, and practise the duties therein contained. I look upon the Secession as indeed the cause of God, but sadly mismanaged and dishonoured by myself and others. Alas! for that pride, passion, selfishness, and unconcern for the glory of Christ, and spiritual edification of souls, which has so often prevailed! Alas! for our want of due meekness, gentleness, holy zeal, self-denial, hearty grief for sin, compassion to souls in immediate connexion with us, or left in the established church, which became distinguished witnesses for Christ. Alas! that we did not chiefly strive to *pray better*, *preach better*, and *live better* than our neighbours. Study to see every thing with your own eyes, but never indulge an itch after novelties: most of those, which are now esteemed such, are nothing but *old errors*, which were long ago justly refuted, varnished over with some new expressions. Never, by your peevishness, contentions, eagerness about worldly things, or the like, make others think lightly of the cause of God among your hands. If I mistake not, the churches are entering into a fearful cloud of apostacy and trouble. But he that endures to the end shall be saved. Be ye faithful unto the death, and Christ shall give you a crown of life. But if any man draw back, God's soul shall have no pleasure in him.

9. Always improve and live on that blessed encouragement, which is offered to you as Christians and ministers in the gospel. Let all your wants be on Christ. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Cast all your cares on him, for he careth for you. Cast all your burdens on him, and he will sustain you. If your holy services, through your mismanagement, occasion your uncommon guilt, his blood "cleanseth from all sin." You have an "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for your sins." If you be often difficulted how to act, he hath said, "The meek will he guide in judgment: the meek will he teach his way. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way, which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye set upon thee. I will lead the blind in a way, which they know not." If you be much discouraged because of your rough way, and your want of strength, he has said, "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places. Fear not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee: I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Fear not, worm Jacob, I will help thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. I will make thee a new sharp threshing-instrument, and thou shalt thresh the mountains. My grace shall be sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. As thy days are, so shall thy strength be." If your troubles be many, he hath said, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee: the rivers shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest

through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, nor shall the flame kindle upon thee." If your incomes be small and pinching, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich. He shall see his seed, the travail of his soul, and be satisfied:" and he has promised, "I will abundantly bless her provision, and satisfy her poor with bread. I will satiate the soul of her priests with fatness." A salary of remarkable fellowship with Christ, and of success in winning souls, is the most delightful and enriching. If your labours appear to have little success, be the more diligent and dependent on Christ. "Never mourn as they that have no hope." Let not "the eunuch say, I am a dry tree." Jesus hath said, "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground. I will pour my Spirit on thy seed, and my blessing on thine offspring. A seed shall serve him. The whole earth shall be filled with his glory. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ." Believe it on the testimony of God himself; believe it on the testimony of all his faithful servants; and, if mine were of any avail, I should add it, that there is no master so kind as Christ; no service so pleasant and profitable as that of Christ; and no reward so full, satisfying, and permanent as that of Christ. Let us therefore "begin all things from Christ; carry on all things with and through Christ; and let all things aim at and end in Christ."

DIALOGUES

CONCERNING

ELOQUENCE IN GENERAL;

AND

PARTICULARLY THAT KIND, WHICH IS PROPER FOR THE PULPIT.

BY M. DE FENELON,
Archbishop of Cambray.

PREFACE,

BY THE CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

Both the ancients and the moderns have treated of eloquence, with different views, and in different ways; as logicians, as grammarians, and as critics: but we still wanted an author, who should handle this delicate subject as a philosopher, and a christian: and this the late Archbishop of Cambray has done in the following dialogues.

In the ancient writers we find many solid precepts of rhetoric, and very just rules laid down with great exactness: but they are oft-times too numerous, too dry; and, in fine, rather curious than useful. Our author reduces the essential rules of this wonderful art, to these three points; proving, painting, and moving the passions.

To qualify his orator for proving, or establishing any truth, he would have him a philosopher; who knows how to enlighten the understanding, while he moves the passions; and to act at once upon all the powers of the mind; not only by placing the truth in so clear a light as to gain attention and assent; but likewise by moving all the secret springs of the soul, to make it love that truth it is convinced of? In one word, our author would have his orator's mind filled with bright, useful truths, and the most exalted views.

That he may be able to paint, or describe well, he should have a poetic kind of enthusiasm; and know how to employ beautiful figures, lively images, and bold touches, when the subject requires them. But this art ought to be entirely concealed: or, if it must appear,

it should seem to be a just copy of nature. Wherefore our author rejects all such false ornaments as serve only to please the ear, with harmonious sounds; and the imagination, with ideas that are more gay and sparkling, than just and solid.

To move the passions, he would have an orator set every truth in its proper place; and so connect them that the first may make way for the second; and the next support the former: so that the discourse shall gradually advance in strength and clearness, till the hearers perceive the whole weight and force of the truth. And then he ought to display it in the liveliest images; and both in his words and gesture use all those affecting movements, that are proper to express the passions he would excite.

It is by reading the ancients that we must form our taste, and learn the art of eloquence in all its extent. But seeing that some of the ancients themselves have their defects, we must read them with caution and judgment. Our learned author distinguishes the genuine beauties of the purest antiquity, from the false ornaments used in after ages; he points out what is excellent, and what is faulty, both in sacred and profane authors; and shews us that the eloquence of the Holy Scripture, in many places, surpasses that of the Greeks and Romans, in native simplicity, liveliness, grandeur, and in every thing that can recommend truth to our assent and admiration.

DIALOGUES

CONCERNING ELOQUENCE.

THE FIRST DIALOGUE, BETWEEN *A.* AND *B.* AND *C.*

A. WELL, Sir, I suppose you have been hearing the sermon to which you would have carried me. I have but very little curiosity that way, and am content with our parish minister.

B. I was charmed with my preacher. You had a great loss, Sir, in not hearing him. I have hired a pew, that I may not miss one of his Lent sermons. O! he is a wonderful man. If you did but once hear him, you could never bear any other.

A. If it be so, I am never to hear him. I would not have any one preacher give me a distaste of all others; on the contrary, I should choose one that will give me such a relish and respect for the word of God, as may dispose me the more to hear it preached every where. But since I have lost so much by not hearing this fine discourse you are so pleased with, you may make up part of that loss, if you will be so good as to communicate to us what you remember of it.

B. I should only mangle the sermon, by endeavouring to repeat any part of it. There were a hundred

beauties in it that one cannot recollect, and which none but the preacher himself could display.

A. Well; but let us at least know something of his design, his proofs, his doctrine, and the chief truths he enlarged on. Do you remember nothing? Were you inattentive?

B. Far from it: I never listened with more attention and pleasure.

C. What is the matter then, do you want to be entreated?

B. No; but the preacher's thoughts were so refined, and depended so much on the turn and delicacy of his expressions, that though they charmed me while I heard them, they cannot be easily recollected; and though one could remember them, if they be expressed in other words, they would not seem to be the same thoughts; but would lose all their grace and force.

A. Surely, Sir, these beauties must be very fading, if they vanish thus upon the touch, and will not bear a review. I should be much better pleased with a discourse which has more body in it, and less spirit; that things might make a deeper impression on the mind, and be more easily remembered. What is the end of speaking but to persuade people, and to instruct them in such truths as they can retain?

C. Now you have begun, Sir, I hope you will go on with this useful subject.

A. I wish I could prevail with you, Sir, to give us some general notion of the elegant harangue you heard.

B. Since you are so very urgent, I will tell you what I can recollect of it. The text was this,* 'I have eaten ashes like bread.' Now could any one make a

* Psalm cii. 9.

happier choice of a text for Ash-Wednesday! he shewed us that, according to this passage, ashes ought this day to be the food of our souls; then in his preamble he ingeniously interwove the story of Artemesia, with regard to her husband's ashes. His* transition to his Ave Maria was very artful; and his division was extremely ingenious: you shall judge of it. 1. 'Though this dust,' said he, 'be a sign of repentance, it is a principle of felicity. 2. Though it seems to humble us, it is really a source of glory. 3. And though it represents death, it is a remedy that gives immortal life.' He turned this division various ways, and every time he gave it a new lustre by his antitheses. The rest of his discourse was not less bright and elegant; the language was polite; the thoughts new; the periods were harmonious; and each of them concluded with some surprising turn. He gave such just characters of common life, that his hearers found their various pictures faithfully drawn: and his exact anatomy of all the passions equalled the maxims of the great ROCHEFOUCAULT; in short, I think it was a master-piece. But, Sir, I shall be glad to know your opinion of it.

A. I am unwilling to tell you my thoughts, or to lessen your esteem, of it. We ought to reverence the

* The Romish preachers, in the preamble of their sermons, addressed themselves to the Virgin Mary; and are ofttimes very artful in their transition to it, as our author observes. We have a remarkable example of this in one of the greatest French orators, M L'Esprit Flechier, bishop of Nismes, who seems to be oftner than once alluded to in these dialogues. In his panegyric on S. Joseph he introduces his Ave Maria thus,—Every thing seems to concur to the glory of my subject; the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, and Mary, are concerned in it; why may I not hope for the assistance of one of them, the grace of the other, and the intercessions of the Virgin? To whom we will address ourselves in those words that the angel said to her, and which S. Joseph no doubt often repeated; Hail! Mary, &c. *Panegyriques*, Vol. i. p. 71.

word of God; to improve ourselves by all the truths that a preacher explains; and avoid a critical humour, lest we should lessen the authority of the sacred function.

B. You have nothing to fear, Sir, at present. It is not out of curiosity that I ask your opinion; but because I would have clear notions of it; and such solid instructions as may not only satisfy myself, but be of use to others; for you know my profession obliges me to preach. Give us your thoughts therefore, without any reserve; and do not be afraid either of contradicting or offending me.

A. Since you will have it so I must obey your commands. To be free then; I conclude, from your account of this sermon, that it was a very sorry one.*

B. Why so?

A. Why; can a sermon, in which the scripture is falsely applied; a scrap of profane history is told after a dry, childish manner; and vain affectation of wit runs throughout the whole; can such a sermon be good?

B. By no means: but I do not think that the sermon I heard is of that sort.

A. Have patience, and I doubt not but you and I shall agree. When the preacher chose these words for his text, 'I have eaten ashes like bread,' ought he to have amused his audience with observing some kind of

* "A preacher may propose a very regular method, prosecute it very exactly, express himself all along with abundance of accuracy, and, if you will, of elegance too; adorn the whole with many a fine flower and artificial trapping of language; in short, deliver a very pretty harangue, a very genteel discourse, as it is commonly termed; which yet may prove, after all, but a sorry sermon, and in reality good for little, but to amuse superficial judges, and to convince thorough ones, that the man aspires at the reputation, without the qualification, of an orator." FORDYCE, *on Pulpit Eloquence.*

relation between the mere sound of his text, and the ceremony of the day? should he not first have explained the true sense of the words, before he applied them to the present occasion?

B. It had been better.

A. Ought he not therefore to have traced the subject a little higher, by entering into the true occasion and design of the Psalm; and explaining the context? Was it not proper for him to inquire whether the interpretation he gave of the words was agreeable to the true meaning of them, before he delivered his own sense to the people, as if it were the word of God?

B. He ought to have done so: but what fault was there in his interpretation?

A. Why, I will tell you. David, (who was the author of the cii. Psalm,) speaks of his own misfortunes: he tells us, that his enemies insulted him cruelly, when they saw him in the dust, humbled at their feet, and reduced (as he poetically expresses it) to 'eat ashes like bread,' and 'to mingle his drink with weeping.' Now, what relation is there between the complaints of David, driven from his throne, and persecuted by his son Absalom; and the humiliation of a Christian, who puts ashes on his forehead, to remind him of his mortality, and disengage him from sinful pleasures? Could the preacher find no other text in scripture? Did Christ and his apostles, or the prophets, never speak of death, and the dust of the grave, to which all our pride and vanity must be reduced? Does not the scripture contain many affecting images of this important truth? Might he not have been content with the words of Genesis,* which are so natural and proper for this ceremony,

* Gen. iii. 19.

and chosen by the church itself? Should a vain delicacy make him afraid of too often repeating a text that the Holy Spirit has dictated, and which the church appoints to be used every year? Why should he neglect such a pertinent passage, and many other places of scripture, to pitch on one that is not proper? This must flow from a depraved taste, and a fond inclination to say something that is new.

B. You grow too warm, Sir: supposing the literal sense of the text not to be the true meaning of it, the preacher's remarks might however be very fine and solid.

C. As for my part, I do not care whether a preacher's thoughts be fine or not, till I am first satisfied of their being true. But, Sir, what say you to the rest of the sermon?

A. It was exactly of a piece with the text. How could the preacher give such misplaced ornaments to a subject in itself so terrifying; and amuse his hearers with an idle story of Artemesia's sorrow; when he ought to have alarmed them, and given them the most terrible images of death?

B. I perceive then you do not love turns of wit, on such occasions. But what would become of eloquence if it were stript of such ornaments? Would you confine every body to the plainness of country preachers? Such men are useful among the common people; but persons of distinction have more delicate ears; and we must adapt our discourses to their polite taste.

A. You are now leading me off from the point. I was endeavouring to convince you, that the plan of the sermon was ill laid; and I was just going to touch upon the division of it: but I suppose you already perceive the reason why I dislike it; for the preacher lays down

three quaint conceits for the subject of his whole discourse. When one chooses to divide a sermon, he should do it plainly, and give such a division as naturally arises from the subject itself, and gives light and just order to the several parts; such a division as may be easily remembered, and at the same time help to connect and retain the whole; in fine, a division that shews at once the extent of the subject, and of all its parts. But, on the contrary, here is a man who endeavours to dazzle his hearers, and puts them off with three points of wit, or puzzling riddles, which he turns and plies so dexterously, that they must fancy they saw some tricks of legerdemain.* Did this preacher use such a serious, grave manner of address, as might make you hope for something useful and important from him? But, to return to the point you proposed; did you not ask me whether I meant to banish eloquence from the pulpit?

B. Yes. I fancy that is your drift.

A. Think you so? pray what do you mean by eloquence?

B. It is the art of speaking well.

A. Has this art no other end, besides that of speaking well? Have not men some design in speaking? Or do they talk only for the sake of talking?

B. They speak to please, and to persuade others.

A. Pray let us carefully distinguish these two things.

* "A blind desire to shine and to please, is often at the expense of that substantial honour which might be obtained, were Christian orators to give themselves up to the pure emotions of piety, which so well agree with the sensibility necessary to eloquence." ABBE MAURY'S *Principles of Eloquence*, sect. 9.

"Uncommon expressions, strong flashes of wit, pointed similes, and epigrammatic turns, especially when they recur too frequently, often disfigure, rather than embellish, a discourse. It commonly happens, in such cases, that twenty insipid conceits are found for one thought which is really beautiful."--HUME'S *Essays*.

Men talk in order to persuade; that is certain: and too often they speak likewise to please others. But while one endeavours to please, he has another view; which, though more distant, ought to be his chief aim. A man of probity has no other design in pleasing others, than that he may the more effectually inspire them with the love of justice, and other virtues; by representing them as most amiable. He who seeks to advance his own interest, his reputation, or his fortune, strives to please, only that he may gain the affection and esteem of such as can gratify his ambition, or his avarice: so that this very design of pleasing is still but a different manner of persuasion that the orator aims at; for he pleases others to inveigle their affection; that he may thereby persuade them to what advances his interest.

B. You cannot but own then that men often speak to please. The most ancient orators had this view. Cicero's orations plainly shew that he laboured hard for reputation: and who will not believe the same of Isocrates, and Demosthenes too? All the panegyrists were more solicitous for their own honour, than for the fame of their heroes; and they extolled a prince's glory to the skies, chiefly because they hoped to be admired for their ingenious manner of praising him. This ambition seems to have been always reckoned commendable both among the Greeks and the Romans: and such emulation brought eloquence to its perfection: it inspired men with noble thoughts and generous sentiments, by which the ancient republics were made to flourish. The advantageous light in which eloquence appeared in great assemblies, and the ascendency it gave the orator over the people, made it to be admired, and helped to spread polite learning. I cannot see indeed why such an emu-

lation should be blamed even among christian orators; provided they did not shew an indecent affectation in their discourses, nor in the least enervate the precepts of the gospel. We ought not to censure what animates young people, and forms our greatest preachers.

A. You have here put several things together, which, if you please, Sir, we will consider separately; and observe some method in inquiring what we ought to conclude from them. But let us above all things avoid a wrangling humour; and examine the subject with calmness and temper, like persons who are afraid of nothing so much as of error, and let us place the true point of honour in a candid acknowledgment of our mistakes, whenever we perceive them.

B. That is the exact state of my mind; or at least I judge it to be so; and I entreat you to tell me when you find me transgressing this equitable rule.

A. We will not as yet talk of what relates to preachers; for that point may be more seasonably considered afterwards. Let us begin with those orators, whose examples you vouched. By mentioning Demosthenes and Isocrates together, you disparage the former; for the latter was a lifeless declaimer, that busied himself in polishing his thoughts, and giving an harmonious cadence to his periods. He had a very* low and vulgar notion of eloquence; and placed almost the whole of it,

* In the introduction of this very panegyric, that our author mentions, Isocrates says, Such is the nature of eloquence; that it makes great things appear little; and small things to seem great; it can represent old things as new; and new things as if they were old; and that therefore he would not decline a subject that others had handled before him, but would endeavour to declaim better than they.—Upon which Longinus (§ 38.) makes this judicious remark; that by giving such a character of eloquence, in the beginning of his panegyric, the orator in effect cautioned his hearers not to believe his discourse.

in a nice disposal of his words. A man who employed ten or (as others say) fifteen years, in smoothing the periods of a panegyric, which was a discourse concerning the necessities of Greece, could give but a very small and slow relief to the republic, against the enterprises of the Persian king. Demosthenes spoke against Philip in a quite different manner. You may read the comparison that Dionysius Halicarnassius has made of these two orators, and see there the chief faults he observed in Isocrates; whose discourses are vainly gay and florid; and his periods adjusted with incredible pains, merely to please the ear: while on the contrary,* Demosthenes moves, warms, and captivates the heart. He was too sensibly touched with the interest of his country, to mind the little glittering fancies that amused Isocrates. Every oration of Demosthenes is a close chain of reasoning, that represents the generous notions of a soul, who disdains any thought that is not great. His discourses gradually increase in force by greater light and new reasons; which are always illustrated by bold figures and lively images. One cannot but see that he has the good of the republic entirely at heart; and that nature itself speaks in all his transports: for his artful address is so masterly, that it never appears. Nothing ever equalled the force and vehemence of his discourses. Have you never read the remarks that Longinus made on them, in his treatise of the Sublime?

* In oratoribus vero, Græcis quidem, admirabile est quantum inter omnes unus excellat. Attamen cum esset Demosthenes, multi oratores magni, et clari fuerunt, et antea, fuerant, nec postea defecerunt. Cic. *Orat.* § 2.

Quid denique Demosthenes? non cunctos illos tenues et circumspectos (oratores) vi, sublimitate, impetu, cultu, compositione superavit? non insurgit locis? non figuris gaudet? non translationibus nitet? non oratione ficta dat carentibus vocem?—*Quintil.* lib. xii. cap. 10.

B. No; is not that the treatise that Mr. Boileau translated? Do you think it fine?

A. I am not afraid to tell you that I think it surpasses Aristotle's Rhetoric; which, though it be a very solid tract, is yet clogged with many dry precepts, that are rather curious, than fit for practice; so that it is more proper to point out the rules of art to such as are already eloquent, than to give us a just taste of rhetoric, and to form true orators. But Longinus in his discourse on the Sublime, intersperses among his precepts, many fine examples from the greatest authors, to illustrate them. He* treats of the Sublime in a lofty manner, as his translator has judiciously observed: he warms our fancy, and exalts our mind; he forms our taste; and teaches us to distinguish what is either fine, or faulty, in the most famous ancient writers.

B. Is Longinus such a wonderful author? Did he not live in the days of Zenobia, and the emperor Aurelian?

A. Yes; you cannot but know their history.

B. Did not those days fall vastly short of the politeness of former ages? and can you imagine that an author, who flourished in the declension of learning and eloquence, had a better taste than Isocrates? I cannot believe it.

A. I was surprised myself, to find it so: but you need only read him, to be convinced of it. Though he lived in a very corrupted age, he formed his judgment upon the ancient models; and has avoided almost all the reign-

* Thee, bold Longinus! all the nine inspire,
And bless their critic with a poet's fire:
An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, yet is always just;
Whose own example strengthens all his laws,
And is himself that great Sublime he draws.

Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism, p. 45.

ing faults of his own time; I say almost all, for I must own, he studied rather what is admirable, than what is useful; and did not consider eloquence as subservient to morality; nor apply it to direct the conduct of life. And in this he does not seem to have had such solid views as the ancient Greeks, and especially some of their philosophers. But we ought to forgive him a failing, for which Isocrates was far more remarkable, though he lived in a more refined age. And this defect ought the rather to be over-looked in a particular discourse, where Longinus does not treat of what is proper to instruct men, but of what is apt to move and seize their passions. I choose to recommend this author, Sir, because he will help to explain my meaning to you. You will see what a glorious character he gives Demosthenes, from whom he quotes several passages that are most sublime: he will likewise show you those faults of Isocrates that I mentioned. If you be unwilling to take the trouble of becoming acquainted with these authors, by reading their works; you may get a very just notion of them by consulting Longinus. Let us now leave Isocrates; and talk of Demosthenes and Cicero.

B. You are for leaving Isocrates, because he is not for your purpose.

A. Let us go on then with Isocrates, since you are not yet convinced; and let us judge of his rhetoric by the rules of eloquence itself; and by the sentiments of Plato, the most* eloquent writer among the ancients. Will you be determined by him?

* Sed ego neque illis assentiebar, neque harum disputationum inventori, et principi longe omnium in dicendo gravissimo, et *Elloquentissimo Platoni*, cujus tum Athenis cum Carneade diligentius legi Gorgiam quo in libro, hoc maxime admirabar Platonem, quod mihi in oratoribus irridendis, ipse esse *Orator* Summus videbatur. Cic. *de Orat.* lib. 1. § 2. Quid denique Demosthenes?—non

B. I will be determined by him, if he be in the right: but I never resign my judgment implicitly to any author.

A. Remember this rule: it is all that I ask of you. And if you do not let some fashionable prejudices bias your judgment, reason will soon convince you of the truth. I would therefore have you believe neither Isocrates, nor Plato: but judge of them both, by clear principles. Now I suppose you will grant that the chief end of eloquence is to persuade men to embrace truth and virtue.

B. I am not of your mind: this is what I have already denied.

A. I will endeavour to prove it then. Eloquence, if I mistake not, may be considered in three respects: as the art of enforcing truth on people's minds, and of making them better: as an art indifferent in itself; which wicked men may use as well as good; and which may be applied to recommend injustice and error, as well as probity and truth: and as an art, which selfish men may use to ingratiate themselves with others; to raise their reputation, and make their fortune. Which of these ends do you admit of?

B. I allow of them all. What do you infer from this concession?

A. The inference will afterwards appear. Have patience a little; and be satisfied, if I say nothing but what is evidently true, till by gradual advances I lead you to the right conclusion. Of the three ends of eloquence, I now mentioned, you will undoubtedly prefer the first.

illud jusjurandum per cæsos in Marathone ac Salamine propugnatores reipublicæ, satis manifesto docet præceptorem ejus Platonem fuisse? quem ipsum num Asianum appellabimus plerumque instinctis divino spiritu vatibus comparandum?

Quint. lib. xii. *cap.* 10. *See Longinus,* § xiii.

B. Yes: it is the best.

A. What think you of the second?

B. I see what you drive at; you are going into a fallacy. The second sort is faulty, because of the ill use the orator makes of his eloquence, to enforce error and vice. But still the rhetoric of a wicked man may be good in itself, though the use he makes of it be pernicious. Now we are talking of the nature and rules of eloquence; not of the uses it should be applied to. Let us keep to the true state of the question.

A. If you will do me the favour to hear me a little, you will find that I have the point in dispute always in view. You seem then to condemn the second sort of eloquence; or, to speak without ambiguity, you condemn the abuse of rhetoric.*

B. Right. You now speak correctly; so far then we are agreed.

A. What say you of the third end of eloquence; I mean the orator's endeavouring to please others by talking; that he may raise his reputation or his fortune?

B. You know my opinion already. I reckon such an use of eloquence very fair and allowable; seeing it excites a laudable emulation, and helps to improve men's talents.

* When I consider the means of happy living (says an eloquent writer) and the causes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear recanting what I said before; and concluding that eloquence ought to be banished out of all civil societies, as a thing fatal to peace and good manners. To this opinion I should wholly incline, if I did not find, that it is a weapon which may be as easily procured by bad men, as by good; and that if these only should cast it away, and those retain it; the naked innocence of virtue would be upon all occasions exposed to the armed malice of the wicked.

Bishop Sprat's Hist. of the Royal Society, p. iii.

A. What kind of talents would you have chiefly improved? Suppose you had some new state or commonwealth, to model, in what kinds of knowledge would you have the subjects trained up, and instructed?

B. In every kind that could make them better. I would endeavour to make them good subjects, peaceable, obedient, and zealous for the public welfare. I would have them fit to defend their country in case of war; and in peace to observe and support the laws; to govern their families; cultivate their lands; train up their children to the practice of virtue, and inspire them with a strong and just sense of religion: I would have them carry on such a trade as the state and necessities of the country might require: and apply themselves to such arts and sciences as are useful in common life. These, I think, ought to be the chief aims of a lawgiver.

A. Your views are very just and solid. You would then have subjects averse to laziness; and employed about such useful things as should tend some way or other to advance the public good.

B. Certainly.

A. And would you exclude all useless professions?

B. Yes.

A. You would allow only of such bodily exercises as conduced to people's health, and strength? I do not mention the beauty of the body; for that is a natural consequence of health and vigour, in bodies that are duly formed.

B. I would suffer no other exercises.

A. Would you not therefore banish all those that serve only to amuse people, and cannot render them fitter to bear either the constant labours and employments of peace, or the fatigues of war?

B. Yes; I should follow that rule.

A. I suppose you would do it for the same reason that you would likewise condemn (as you already granted,) all those exercises of the mind which do not conduce to render it more strong, sound, and beautiful; by making it more virtuous.

B. It is so. What do you infer from that? I do not see your drift: your windings are very long.

A. Why; I would argue from the plainest principles; and not advance the least step, without carrying light and certainty along with us. Answer me, then, if you please.

B. Seeing we lay down the rule you last mentioned, for the management of the body, there is certainly greater reason to follow it in the conduct and improvement of the mind.

A. Would you permit such arts as are only subservient to pleasure, amusement, and vain curiosity; and have no relation either to the duties of domestic life, or the common offices of society?

B. I would banish all such from my commonwealth.

A. If you allowed of mathematicians then it would be for the sake of mechanics, navigation, surveying of land, the fortification of places; and such calculations as are useful in practice; &c. So that it is the usefulness of the mathematics that would recommend them to your patronage. And if you tolerated physicians and lawyers, it would be for the preservation of health; and the support of justice.

B. Right.

A. And with the same view of usefulness you would admit of all other serviceable professions.

B. Certainly.

A. But how would you treat the musicians?

B. I would encourage them.

A. Would you not lay them under some proper restraint, according to the judgment and practice of the ancient Greeks, who always joined pleasure and usefulness together?

B. Explain yourself a little.

A. Though they joined music and poetry together, and carried both these arts to the greatest perfection; they applied them to inspire people's minds with fortitude, and noble thoughts. They used poetry and music to prepare them for battle; and carried musicians and their various instruments, to war. Hence came drums and trumpets, which raised in them a spirit of enthusiasm, and a sort of fury that they called divine. It was by music, and the charms of verse, that they softened savage nations: and by the same harmony, they sweetly instilled wisdom into their children. They made them sing Homer's verses to inspire their minds with the love of glory, liberty, and their native country; and with a contempt of death, and riches, and effeminate pleasure. They gave their very dances a grave and serious turn: for it is certain they danced not merely for the sake of pleasure. We see by David's example,* that the eastern people reckoned dancing a serious kind of employment, like music, and poetry. The mysterious dances of the priests were adopted by the heathens among their ceremonies, on solemn festivals, in honour of their gods. There were a thousand instructions couched under their poems, and their fables: nay, their most grave and austere philosophy always appeared with an air of gaiety, and good humour. All those arts that consisted either

* 2 Sam. vi. 5, 14.

in melodious sounds, regular motions of the body, or the use of words; music, dancing, eloquence, and poetry, were invented to express the passions; and, by that means, to communicate these passions to others. Thus did they endeavour to convey noble sentiments to people's minds, and give them lively, affecting views of the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice. So that all these arts, under the show of pleasure, favoured the most serious designs of the ancients; and were used to promote morality and religion. Even the diversion of hunting was encouraged to train up the youth for war. Their strongest pleasures contained always some solid instruction. From which source flowed those many heroic virtues in Greece, which all ages have since admired. It is true, this first kind of instruction was afterwards changed; and of itself was accompanied with remarkable defects. The chief fault of it was, its being founded on a false and pernicious scheme of religion; in which the Greeks, and all the ancient sages of the heathen world were strangely deceived; being plunged into gross idolatry. But notwithstanding this fundamental mistake, they chose a very proper way of inspiring men with religion and virtue: their method was wise, agreeable, and apt to make a lively, lasting impression.

C. You said that this first institution was afterwards changed: pray, how did it happen?

A. Though virtue gives men the true politeness; if great care be not taken, politeness gradually degenerates into an unmanly softness. The Asiatic Greeks fell first into this corruption. The Ionians grew effeminate; and all that coast of Asia was a theatre of luxury. The Cretans too became corrupted, notwithstanding the wise laws of Minos. You know the verse that St. Paul quotes

from one of their own poets.* Corinth was remarkable for its excessive riot, and dissoluteness. The Romans, as yet unpolished, began to fall into such practices as quite relaxed their rustic virtue. Athens was not free from the general contagion, with which Greece was all-over infected. Pleasure, which was used at first to convey wisdom into people's minds, usurped the place of wisdom itself: and in vain did the philosophers remonstrate against this disorder. Socrates arose, and showed his deluded fellow-citizens that the pleasure, about which they were entirely employed, ought only to be used as the vehicle of wisdom, and an incentive to virtue. Plato, his disciple, (who was not ashamed to compose his dialogues on the plan and subject of his master's discourses,) banished from his republic all such musical notes, scenes of tragedy, and poetical compositions, (even such parts of Homer himself,) as did not incline people to love order, and wise laws. This, Sir, was the judgment of Socrates and Plato concerning poets and musicians: do you approve of it?

B. I am entirely of their mind; and would allow of nothing that is useless. Since we may find pleasure enough in solid and valuable things, we ought not to seek for it elsewhere. In order to recommend virtue to men's esteem and practice, we must show them that it is consistent with pleasure; and on the contrary, if we separate pleasure from virtue, people will be strongly tempted to forsake a virtuous course. Besides, that which gives pleasure only, without instruction, can at best but amuse and soften the mind. Do not you see, Sir, how much a philosopher I am become, by hearing

* Κρητες αει ψευσται, κακα Θηρια, γαστερες ἀργαι.
Tit. i. 12.

you? But let us go on to the end; for we are not yet perfectly agreed.

A. I hope we shall be very quickly. And since you are grown so much a philosopher, give me leave to ask one question more. We have obliged musicians, and poets, to employ their art only for promoting virtue; and the subjects of your new republic are debarred from all such spectacles as can only please and not instruct them. But what would you do with conjurers?

B. They are impostors, that ought to be banished from all societies.

A. They do no harm. You cannot think they are sorcerers; so that you have no reason to be afraid of their practising any diabolical art.

B. No, I do not fear that: nor should I give the least credit to any of their senseless stories. But they do harm enough by amusing the common people. I will not suffer such idle persons in my commonwealth, as divert others from their business, and have no other employment but to amuse people with foolish talk.

A. But, perhaps, they get a livelihood that way; and lay up wealth for themselves, and their families.

B. No matter: they must find out some honest way of living. It is not enough that they seek a livelihood; they must gain it by some employment that is useful to the public. I say the same of all those strolling vagabonds, who amuse crowds with silly prattle and foolish songs. For though they should never lie, nor say any thing that is immodest; their being useless to the public is guilt enough. So that they ought either to be excluded from the society, or compelled to follow some useful occupation.

A. Would you not at least tolerate tragedians, pro-

vided they represent no scenes of immodesty or extravagant love? I do not ask you this question as a Christian: answer only as a lawgiver, and a philosopher.

B. If tragedies did not conduce to instruction as well as to pleasure, I should condemn them.

A. Right. In that you are exactly of Plato's opinion; for he would not allow of any poems or tragedies in his republic, that should not first be examined by the guardians of the laws; that so the people might neither hear nor see any thing but what should tend to strengthen the laws, and promote virtue. In this you likewise fall in with the sentiments of other ancient authors, who judged that tragedy ought to turn chiefly upon two passions; either the terror, that arises from a view of the fatal effects of vice; or that compassion, which accompanies the representation of an oppressed and steady virtue. Sophocles and Euripides wrote with these views, and always endeavoured to excite either pity or terror.

B. I remember I have met with this last rule in Mr. Boileau's Art of Poetry.

A. You are right. He is a man that knows perfectly well not only the foundation of poetry, but likewise the solid aim to which philosophy (superior to all arts) ought to direct the poet.

B. But whither are you leading me all this while?

A. I lead you no farther: you guide yourself now; and are happily come to the conclusion I first proposed. Have you not said, that in your republic, you would not suffer idle people who amuse others, and have no other business but merely to talk? Is it not upon this principle that you would exclude all such tragedies as do not convey instruction as well as pleasure? Now, will you

suffer that to be done in prose, that you will not tolerate in verse? After such a just rigour against useless poetry, how can you show any favour to those declaimers,* who talk only to show their parts?

B. But these orators we were speaking of, have two designs that are commendable.

A. What are they?

B. The first is to maintain themselves; for, by their profession they procure a subsistence. Their rhetoric gets them repute; and this brings along with it that wealth they stand in need of.

A. You yourself have already answered this pretence; for, did you not say that it is not enough that one gains a livelihood, unless he get it by some employment that is useful to the public? He, who should represent tragedies that give no instruction, might get his bread by them: but this would not hinder you from driving him out of the commonwealth. You would say to him, 'Go, choose some regular useful employment; and do not divert your neighbours from their business. If you would have a lawful gain from them, apply yourself to do them some real service; or to make them more wise

* Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties these specious tropes and figures have brought on our knowledge? how many rewards, that are due to more profitable and difficult arts, have been still snatched away by the easy vanity of fine speaking; for now I am warmed with this just anger, I cannot withhold myself from betraying the shallowness of all those seeming mysteries, upon which we writers and speakers look so big. And in few words I dare say, that of all the studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtained, than this vicious abundance of phrase, this trick of metaphors, this volubility of tongue, which makes so great noise in the world. But I spend words in vain; for the evil is now so inveterate, that it is hard to know whom to blame; or where to begin to reform. We all value one another so much upon this beautiful deceit, and labour so long after it, in the years of our education; that we cannot but ever after think kinder of it than it deserves.

Bisohp Sprat's Hist. of the Royal Society, p. 112.

and virtuous.' Now why should you not say the same to the rhetoricians?

B. But I have a second reason to offer for tolerating them.

A. Pray, let us hear it.

B. Why! the orator serves the public.

A. In what?

B. He improves people's minds, and teaches them eloquence.

A. Suppose I should invent some fantastic art, or imaginary language, that could not be of any use; could I serve the public by teaching such a senseless language, or silly art?

B. No; because one cannot serve others as a master, unless he could teach them something that is useful.

A. You cannot prove then that an orator serves the public, by teaching eloquence, unless you could first show that it is an useful art. Of what use are a man's fine thoughts if they do not advance the public good? I am very sensible that they are advantageous to himself; for they dazzle his hearers; who have so bad a taste that they will applaud his skill, and even reward him for his useless talk. But ought you to suffer such a mercenary, fruitless eloquence in the government you have to model? A shoemaker is serviceable in his way, and maintains his family with what he gains by supplying other people's necessities. So that you see the most ordinary employments tend to some useful purpose; and there is no other art but the rhetorican's that serves only to amuse people with talking. In fine, such eloquence can only, on the one hand, satisfy the vain curiosity of the hearers, and encourage their idleness; and, on the other, gratify the declaimer's pride and ambition,

But, for the honour of your republic, Sir, do not tolerate such an abuse.

B. I must grant that an orator's aim should be to make people more wise and virtuous.

A. Do not forget this: you shall see the consequences of it by and by.

B. Notwithstanding this concession, he, who is employed in instructing others, may at the same time, endeavour to acquire reputation and wealth for himself.

A. I told you before, that we are not now handling the point as Christians: I need only use philosophy against you. Let me put you in mind that you grant an orator is obliged to instruct others with a design to improve them in virtue. Thus we get rid of all useless declaimers. We ought not even to suffer panegyrists any farther than they render true wisdom and probity more amiable by their praises; and propose models of virtue* and valour that are worthy of imitation.

B. What, then, is a panegyric good for nothing, unless it be full of morality?

A. Have you not granted this already? Instruction is the proper end of speech: and the only good reason for praising any hero is, that we may represent his worth to others, in order to excite their emulation; and to shew them, that virtue and true glory are inseparable. Therefore a panegyric should be kept free from all general, excessive, flattering praises, and such barren thoughts as do not afford the least instruction. Every thing should tend to make the hearers in love with what is truly

* Perspicuum est igitur alia esse in homine optanda, alia laudanda. Genus, forma, vires, opes, divitiæ, ceteraque quæ fortuna det, aut extrinsecus, aut corpori, non habent in se veram laudem, quæ deberi Virtuti uni putatur.—Virtus autem quæ est per se ipsa laudabilis, et sine qua nihil laudari potest, tamen habet plures partes, quarum alia est ad laudationem aptior. Cic. de Orat. lib. ii.

great and good. But we find that most panegyrists seem to magnify particular virtues, only that they may the more effectually praise those that practised them, and set off their heroes to greater advantage. When they have any one to praise, they exalt his peculiar virtues far above all others. But every thing has its turn; and, on another occasion, those very qualities, which they preferred before, must now give place to some other virtues, that come in course to be extolled to the highest pitch. In this respect, I think Pliny is to be blamed. If he had praised Trajan as a fit model for other heroes to copy after, this would have been a design worthy of an orator. But the praise of that prince (however deserving he was) ought not to have been Pliny's chief aim. Trajan should only have been proposed to mankind as an imitable example, to allure them to virtue. When a panegyrist has such a mean view, as to praise the person, rather than the virtues that render him conspicuous, this is only flattery addressed to pride.

B. What think you then of those poems, that were made in praise of ancient heroes? Homer has his Achilles; and Virgil his Æneas. Will you condemn these two poets?

A. By no means, Sir; do but examine the design of their works. In the Iliad, Achilles is the chief hero; but his praise is not the main end of the poem. His character is faithfully drawn with all its defects; nay, these very defects are a part of that instruction, which the poet designed to convey to posterity. The great design of this work was to inspire the Greeks with the love of warlike glory; and a dread of discord, as the greatest obstacle to success. This moral instruction is plainly interwoven throughout the poem. The Odyssey

indeed represents, in Ulysses, a hero more regular, and more accomplished: but this is still natural. For, of course, a man, like Ulysses, whose chief character is wisdom, must be more wary, and uniform in his conduct, than such a rough, warm, forward youth as Achilles. So that in drawing both these heroes, Homer seems only to have copied nature. In fine, throughout the Odyssey we find innumerable instructions for the whole conduct of life: and one cannot but observe that the poet's design, in describing a prudent man, whose wisdom makes him always successful, was to shew posterity what good effects might be expected from prudent piety, and a regular life. Virgil in his Æneid, has imitated the Odyssey in his hero's character; and has drawn him brave, moderate, pious, and steady. But it is evident that the praise of Æneas was not the poet's principal aim. That hero was designed to represent the Roman people, who descended from him; and Virgil meant to show them that their extraction was divine; that the gods had destined them to govern the world: and by this he animated them to the practice of such heroic virtues as might support the glory designed for them. Now a heathen could not possibly devise a nobler moral than this. The only fault of which Virgil can be suspected, is his having had his private interest too much in view; and his turning his excellent poem to the praise of Augustus, and his family, with too great an air of flattery. But we ought not to criticise any author too severely.

B. But will you not allow a poet, or an orator, to seek his fortune in an honourable way?

A. After this useful digression concernimg panegyrics, we now return to the difficulty you proposed. The

question is, whether an orator ought to be entirely disinterested?

B. I do not think that he ought; for this would overturn the most common maxims.

A. In your republic, would you not have orators obliged to the strictest rules of truth? do not you own that they ought never to speak in public, but in order to instruct people, to reform their conduct, and strengthen the laws?

B. Yes.

A. An orator then should have nothing either to hope or fear from his hearers, with regard to his own interest. If you allowed of ambitious,* mercenary declaimers, do you think they would oppose all the foolish, unruly passions of men? If they themselves be subject to avarice, ambition, luxury, and such shameful disorders, will they be able to cure others? If they seek after wealth; can they be fit to disengage others from that mean pursuit? I grant, that a virtuous and disinterested orator ought always to be supplied with the conveniences of life: nor can he ever want them, if he be a true philosopher; I mean, such a wise and worthy person as is fit to reform the manners of men: for then he will live after a plain, modest, frugal, laborious manner: he will have occasion but for little; and that little he will never want; though he should earn it with his own hands. Now, what is superfluous ought not to be offered him, as the recompense of his public services: and indeed it is not worthy

* Jam hoc quis non videt, maximam partem orationis in tractatu æqui bonique consistere? dicetne de his secundum debitam rerum dignitatem malus atque iniquus? denique--demus id quod nullo modo fieri potest, idem igenii, studii, doctrinæ, pessimo, atque optimo viro, uter melior dicetur orator? nimirum qui homo quoque melior. Non igitur unquam malus idem homo, et perfectus orator Quint. lib. xii. c. 1.

of his acceptance. He may have honour and authority conferred on him; but if he be master of his passions, as we suppose, and above selfish views, he will use this authority only for the public good; and be ready to resign it, when he can no longer enjoy it without flattery or dissimulation. In short, an orator cannot be fit to persuade people, unless he be inflexibly upright; for, without this steady virtue, his talents and address, would, like a mortal poison, infect and destroy the body politic. For this reason Cicero* thought, that virtue is the chief and most essential quality of an orator; and that he should be a person of such unspotted probity as to be a pattern to his fellow citizens; without which he cannot even seem to be convinced himself of what he says; and consequently, he cannot persuade others.

B. I am sensible there is a great deal of weight in what you say; but after all, may not a man fairly employ his talents to raise himself in the world?

A. Let us look back always to the principles we laid down. We have agreed that eloquence, and the profession of an orator, should be devoted to the instruction of people, and the reformation of their practice. Now, to do this with freedom and success, a man must be disinterested; and must teach others to contemn death, and

* Est enim eloquentia una quædam de summis virtutibus—quæ quo major est vis, hoc est magis probitate jungenda, summaque prudentia; quarum virtutum expertibus si dicendi copiam tradiderimus, non eos quidem oratores effecerimus; sed furentibus quædam arma dederimus. De Orat. l. iii. § 14.

Sit ergo nobis orator quem instituimus is, qui a M. Cicerone finitur, vir bonus dicendi peritus—Adde quod ne studio quidem operis pulcherrimi vacare mens, nisi omnibus vitiis libera, potest—Quid putamus facturas cupiditatem, avaritiam, invidiam? quarum impotentissimæ cogitationes, somnos etiam ipsos, et illa per quietem visa, perturbent. Nihil est enim tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot ac tam variis affectibus concisum atque laceratum, quam mala mens. Quint. lib. xii. cap. 1.

riches, and unmanly pleasure. He must infuse into their minds the love of moderation, frugality, a generous concern for the public good, and an inviolable regard to the laws and constitution: and the orator's zeal for all these must appear in his conduct, as well as in his discourses. But will he, who strives to please others, that he may make his fortune; and who therefore avoids disobliging any body; I say, will such an artful, selfish person inculcute unacceptable truths with boldness and authority? or, if he should, will any one believe a man, who does not seem to believe himself?

B. But supposing him to be in narrow circumstances, he does no harm, I hope, by endeavouring to improve them.

A. If he be pinched, let him try to mend his condition some other way. There are other professions that will easily set him above want. But if he be in such extreme distress as to depend on relief from the public; he is not yet fit to be an orator. Would you choose men that are indigent, and almost starving, to be judges in your commonwealth? Would you not be afraid that their wants might expose them to corruption; or betray them into some dishonourable compliance? Would you not rather choose persons of note and distinction, who are above necessity, and out of the reach of its temptations?

B. I believe I should.

A. For the same reason, if you wanted orators, that is, public masters to instruct, reclaim, and form the minds and manners of the people, would you not choose such men as wanted nothing, and are far above little selfish aims? And if there were others, who had proper talents for this superior office, but were clogged with their personal concerns, and narrow views of private interests;

would you not excuse them from showing their eloquence till they were more easy and disengaged in their circumstances; and could speak in public without being suspected of any mean design?

B. It would be better. But does not the experience of our own age plainly shew, that an orator may make his fortune by preaching rigid virtue with great vehemence? Where can we find keener satires against the prevailing corruptions of the age, and severer moral characters than those which come from the pulpit? Yet people are not disturbed at them; nay, they are pleased with them; and the ingenious preacher gets preferment by them.

A. It is very true; but moral instructions have no weight nor influence, when they are neither supported by clear principles, nor good examples. Whom do you see converted by them? People are accustomed to hear such harangues; and are amused by them, as with so many fine scenes passing before their eyes. They harken to such lectures just as they would read a satire: and they look on the speaker as one that acts his part well. They believe his* life, more than his talk: and when

* The clergy have one great advantage beyond all the rest of the world in this respect, besides all others, that whereas the particular callings of other men prove to them great distractions, and lay many temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their high and holy calling, of being Christians; it is quite otherwise with the clergy; the more they follow their proper callings, they do the more certainly advance their general one; the better priests they are, they become also the better Christians. Every part of their calling, when well performed, raises good thoughts, and brings good ideas into their minds; and tends both to increase their knowledge, and quicken their sense of divine matters. A priest then is more accountable to God, and the world, for his deportment, and will be more severely accounted with, than any other person whatsoever. He is more watched over and observed than all others. Very good men will be, even to a censure, jealous of him; very bad men will wait for his halting, and insult upon it; and all sorts of persons will be willing to defend themselves against the authority of his doctrine and admonitions, by this, he says,

they know him to be selfish, ambitious, vain, given up to sloth and luxury; and see that he parts with none of those enjoyments which he exhorts others to forsake; though, for the sake of custom and ceremony, they hear him declaim; they believe and act as he does. But, what is worst of all; people are too apt to conclude, that men of this profession do not believe what they teach: this disparages their function; and when others preach with a sincere zeal, people will scarce believe this zeal to be sincere.

B. I cannot but own that your notions hang well together; and that they are very convincing when one considers them attentively. But tell me freely, does not all you have said on this subject flow from a pure zeal for christian piety?

A. No; if an unbeliever reason justly, he must fall into the same train of thoughts: but indeed one must have a christian spirit to act up to them; for it is grace alone that can suppress the disorderly emotions of self-love. When I pressed you with the authority of Socrates and Plato, you would not resign your judgment to theirs; and now, since reason itself begins to convince

but does not; the world will reverse this quite, and consider rather how a clerk lives, than what he says. They see the one; and from it conclude what he himself thinks of the other; and will think themselves not a little justified, if they can say that they did no worse than they saw their minister do before them. Therefore a priest must not only abstain from gross scandals; but keep at the farthest distance from them,—such diversions as his health or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be manly, decent, and grave; and such as may neither possess his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to his people. He must also avoid too much familiarity with bad people; and the squandering away his time in too much vain and idle discourse. His cheerfulness ought to be frank; but neither excessive nor licentious. His friends, and his garden ought to be his chief diversions; as his study, and his parish ought to be his chief employments. Bishop Burnet's Disc. of the pastoral care, ch. viii.

you; and that I need not enforce the truth from authorities; what if I should tell you after all, that I have only used their arguments on this subject.

B. Is it possible? I should be very glad of it.

A. Well then; Plato introduces Socrates discoursing with Gorgias, a famous rhetorician, and Callicles, one of his disciples. This Gorgias was Isocrates' master; and (as Tully tells us,) he was the first man that boasted of his being able to talk eloquently on every thing: in which ridiculous vanity he was afterwards imitated by other Greek declaimers. These two men, Gorgias and Callicles, harangued plausibly enough on every subject; being wits that shone in conversation, and had no other business but to talk finely. However they wanted, what* Socrates wished every man to have, solid principles of morality, and a sedate, just way of reasoning. Plato therefore having shown what a ridiculous turn of mind these men had; he represents Socrates as diverting himself with their folly, and facetiously puzzling the two orators so much, that they could not tell him what eloquence is. Then he proves that rhetoric, (which was the profession of these declaimers) is not truly an art: for, according to him, 'an art is a regular discipline, which teaches men to do something that will help to make them wiser, and better than they are.' So that he allows of no other arts but the liberal ones: and he shows that even these are perverted, when they are ap-

*—Inventi sunt qui, cum ipsi doctrina, et ingeniis abundarent, a re autem civili et negotiis, animi quodam judicio abhorrerent, hanc dicendi exercitationem exagitarent, atque contemnerent. Quorum princeps Socrates fuit, is qui omnium eruditorum testimonio, totiusque judicio *Græciæ*, cum prudentia, et acumine, et venustate, et subtilitate, tum vero eloquentia, varietate, copia, quamcumque in partem dedisset, *omnium* fuit facile princeps—cujus ingenium variosque sermones immortalitati scriptis suis Plato tradidit.

CICERO *de Orat.* lib. i. § 16.

plied to any other end besides training up men to virtue. He proves that this was not the aim of the rhetoricians: that even Themistocles and Pericles had quite other views; and that therefore they were not truly orators. He says those famous men only persuaded the Athenians to make harbours, and build walls, and obtain victories: they only made their citizens wealthy, warlike, and powerful; and were afterwards ill treated for it; which was really no more than they might have expected. If they had rendered the people good and virtuous by their rhetoric, they would have been sure of a just recompense; for, he who makes men upright, and good, cannot lose the reward of his labour; seeing virtue and ingratitude are inconsistent. I need not tell you all the arguments he uses to show how useless such false rhetoric is; for, all that I have said hitherto on this point, in my own name, is really taken from him. It will be more proper to represent to you what he says of the evils that these vain haranguers occasion in the republic.

B. It is evident that such rhetoricians were dangerous in the Grecian commonwealths, where they could mislead the people, and usurp the government.

A. That is the chief danger that Socrates apprehended from them. But the principles he lays down, on this occasion, reach a great deal further. In fine, though you and I speak now of ordering a commonwealth; our inquiry and conclusions are not applicable to democracy alone; but to every kind of government, whether it be strictly a republic, an aristocracy, or a monarchy. So that the particular form of government does not enter into the present question. For in all countries, the rules of Socrates are equally useful.

C. I wish you would explain them to us.

A. He says that seeing a man is composed of a mind and a body; he ought to improve them both. Now there are two arts that concern the mind; and two others, that relate to the body. The two that belong to the mind, are moral philosophy, and the knowledge of the national laws. Under the head of moral philosophy he comprehends the laws of nature and nations: and all those dictates of philosophy that are proper to govern the inclinations and manners of the whole republic, as well as of every individual member of it. He considered the second art, as a remedy that is to be used to suppress falsehood, injustice, and the like disorders among the citizens; for, by it lawsuits are determined; and crimes are punished. So that moral philosophy serves to prevent evil; and the knowledge of the laws and constitution, to punish it. There are likewise two arts for managing the body; the gymnastic art, which by due exercise and temperance, renders it healthy, active, vigorous, and graceful; (for, you know, Sir, the ancients made a wonderful use of this art; which we have now quite lost;) and the knowledge of physic which cures the body when its health is lost, or impaired. The gymnastic art assists the body, as moral philosophy doth the soul; namely, to form and improve it; and skill in medicine is helpful to the body, as the knowledge of the laws is to the mind; for correcting and curing disorders. But this wise institution was altered, says Socrates; instead of a solid, practical philosophy, we have only the vain subtilty of wrangling sophists: a set of spurious philosophers, who abuse reason; and, having no sense of public good, aim only at promoting their own selfish ends. Instead of attaining a thorough insight into the national laws, peo-

ple are amused and misled by vain-glorious ostentation of these rhetoricians, who endeavour only to please and dazzle the mind; and instead of recommending the knowledge of the public constitution, and the administration of justice, (which being the medicine of the soul, should be applied to cure its disorderly passions,) these false orators think of nothing but how to spread their own reputation. And with regard to the body, says Socrates, the gymnastic art begins to be exchanged for skill in dress; which gives the body but false, deceitful ornaments. Whereas we ought to desire only such a natural comeliness as results from health of body, and due proportion of its members; which must be acquired and preserved by temperance and exercise. The proper and seasonable use of medicine is likewise laid aside to make room for delicious dishes, and such palatable things as raise and ensnare the appetite. And instead of carrying off gross humours from the body by proper evacuations, to restore its health; nature is clogged and overcharged; and a false appetite is excited by all the various ways of luxury and intemperance. He farther observes, that those orators, who, in order to cure men, should have given them bitter physic, and, with authority, have inculcated the most disagreeable truths; have on the contrary done for the mind, what cooks do for the body: their rhetoric is only an art of dressing up delicacies to gratify the corrupted taste of the people. All their concern is to please and sooth them, by raising their curiosity and admiration. For, these declaimers harangue only for themselves. He concludes his remarks with asking, where are those citizens whom the rhetoricians have cured of their vicious habits? Whom have they made sober and virtuous?

Thus Socrates describes the general disorders, and corruption of manners that prevailed in his time. But does he not talk* like one of the present age, who observes what passes among us; and speaks of the abuses that reign in our own days? Now you have heard the sentiments of this wise heathen: what do you say of that eloquence which tends only to please, and give pretty descriptions; when (as he says) we ought to cauterize, and cut to the quick; and earnestly endeavour to cure people's minds by the bitterness of remedies, and the severity of an abstemious diet? I appeal to your own judgment in this case: if you were sick, would you be pleased with a physician, who, in the extremity of your illness, should waste his time, and amuse you with explaining to you some fine hypothesis in an elegant style; instead of making pertinent inquiries into the cause and symptoms of your distemper, and prescribing suitable remedies? Or, in a trial at law, where your estate or your life were at stake, what would you think of your lawyer, if he should play the wit in your defence, and fill his pleading with flowers of rhetoric and quaint turns, instead of arguing with gravity, strength of reason, and earnestness, to gain your cause? Our natural love of life, and well-being, shows us plainly the

* The ornaments of speaking are much degenerated from their original usefulness. They were at first, no doubt, an admirable instrument in the hands of wise men, when they were only employed to describe goodness, honesty, obedience; in larger, fairer, and more moving images; to represent truth clothed with bodies; and to bring knowledge back again to our very senses, whence it was at first derived to our understanding. But *now* they are generally changed to worse uses; they make the *fancy* disgust the best things, if they come sound and unadorned; they are in open defiance against reason; professing not to hold much correspondence with that; but with its slaves, the passions; they give the mind a motion too changeable and bewitching, to consist with right practice.

Bishop Sprat's Hist. of R. S. p. 111, 112.

absurdity of false oratory, and of the unseasonable ostentation of it, in such cases as I have now mentioned: but we are so strangely unconcerned about religion, and the moral conduct of life, that we do not observe the same ridicule in careless vain-glorious orators; who yet ought to be the spiritual physicians and censors of the people. Indeed the sentiments of Socrates on this subject ought to make us ashamed.

B. I perceive clearly enough that, according to your reasoning, orators ought to be the defenders of the laws, and instructors of the people to teach them true wisdom and virtue. But among the Romans the rhetoric of the bar was otherwise employed.

A. That was certainly the end of it. For, when orators had not occasion to represent in their discourses the general wants of the republic, they were obliged to protect innocence, and the rights of particular persons. And it was on this account that their profession was so much honoured; and that Tully gives us such a lofty character of a true orator.*

B. Let us hear then how orators ought to speak. I long to know your thoughts on this point; seeing you deny the finical, florid manner of Isocrates, which is so much admired and imitated by others.

* Neque vero mihi quidquam præstabilius videtur, quam posse dicendo tenere hominum cœtus, mentes allicere, voluntates compellere quo velit; unde autem velit, deducere. Hæc una res in omni libero populo, maximeque in pacatis tranquillisque civitatibus præcipue semper floruit, semperque dominita est. Quid enim est aut tam admirabile, quam ex infinita multitudine hominum existere unum, qui id quod omnibus natura sit datum, vel solus, vel cum paucis facere possit?—aut tam potens, tamque magnificum, quam populi motus, judicum religiones, senatus gravitatem, unius oratione converti?—ac ne plura, quæ sunt pene innumerabilia, consecter, comprehendam brevi; sic enim statuo, perfecti oratoris moderatione, et sapientia, non solum ipsius dignitatem, sed et privatorum plurimorum, et universæ reipublicæ salutem maxime contineri. Cic. *de Orat. lib.* i. § 8.

A. Instead of giving you my opinion, I shall go on to lay before you the rules that the ancients give us: but I shall only touch upon the chief points; for, I suppose, you do not expect that I should enter into an endless detail of the precepts of rhetoric. There are but too many useless ones; which you must have read in those books where they are copiously explained. It will be enough if we consider the most important rules. Plato in his Phædrus shews us, that the greatest fault of rhetoricians is, their studying the art of persuasion, before they have learned, (from the principles of true philosophy,) what those things are of which they ought to persuade men. He would have orators begin with the study of mankind in general; and then apply themselves to the knowledge of the particular genius and manners of those whom they may have occasion to instruct and persuade. So that they ought first of all to know the nature of man, his chief end and his true interest: the parts of which he is composed, his mind, and his body; and the true way to make him happy: they ought likewise to understand his passions, the disorders they are subject to, and the art of governing them; how they may be usefully raised, and employed on what is truly good; and, in fine, the proper rules to make him live in peace, and become entirely sociable. After this general study, comes that which is particular.

Orators ought to know the laws and customs of their country; and how far they are agreeable to the genius and temper of the people; what are the manners of the several ranks and conditions among them; their different ways of education; the common prejudices, and separate interests that prevail in the present age: and

the most proper way to instruct and reform the people. You see, Sir, this knowledge comprehends all the solid parts of philosophy and politics. So that Plato meant to shew us that none but a philosopher can be a true orator. And it is in this sense we must understand all he says in his Gorgias, against the rhetoricians; I mean, that set of men who made profession of talking finely and persuading others, without eudeavouring to know, from solid philosophy, what one ought to teach them. In short, according to Plato, the true art of oratory consists in understanding those useful truths of which we ought to convince people; and the art of moving their passions, in order to persuasion. Cicero* says almost the very same things. He seems, at first, to think that an orator should know every thing; because he may have occasion to speak on all sorts of subjects; and (as Socrates observed before him)† a man can never talk well on a point of which he is not entirely master. But afterwards, because of the pressing necessities and shortness of life, Tully insists only upon those parts of knowledge that he thinks the most necessary for an orator. He would have him at least well instructed in all that part of philosophy,‡ which relates to

* Ac mea quidem sententia nemo poterit esse omni laude cumulatus orator, nisi erit omnium rerum magnarum, atque artium scientiam consecutus. *De Orat. lib.* 1. § 6. Oratorem plenum atque perfectum esse eum dicam, qui de omnibus rebus possit varie copioseque dicere. *Ibid.* § 13. verum enim oratori quæ sunt in hominum vita, quandoquidem in ea versetur orator, atque ea est ei subjecta materies, omnia quæsita, audita, lecta, disputata, tractata, agitata esse debent. *Lib.* iii. § 14.

† Etenim exrerum cognitione efflorescat, et redundet oportet oratio; quæ, nisi subest res ab oratore percepta, et cognita, inanem quandam habet elocutionem, et pene puerilem. *De Orat.* lib. i. § 6.

‡ Positum sit igitur in primis—sine philosophia non posse effici, quem quærimus eloquentem—nec vero sine philosophorum disciplina, genus, et speciem cujusque rei cernere, neque eam definiendo explicare, nec tribuere in partes possumus:

the conduct and affairs of social life. But above all things, he would have an orator* know the frame of man, both with regard to his soul, and body, and the natural tendency and force of his passions; because the great end of eloquence is to move the secret springs of them. He reckons the knowledge† of the laws, and constitution, to be the foundation of all public discourses: but he does not think a thorough insight into all the particular cases and questions in law to be necessary; because, upon occasion, one may have recourse to experienced lawyers, whose peculiar profession it is to understand and disentangle such intricate points. He thinks, with Plato, that an orator should be a master‡ of reasoning; and know how to define, and argue, and unravel the most specious sophisms. He says we destroy

nec judicare quæ vera, quæ falsa sint; neque cernere consequentia, repugnantia videre, ambigua distinguere. Quid dicam de natura rerum cujus cognitio magnam orationis suppeditat copiam? De vita, de officiis, de virtute, de moribus? *Orat.* § 4.

* Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi.—*De Orat. lib.* i. § 5.—Num admoveri possit oratio ad sensus animorum, atque motus vel inflammandos, vel etiam extinguendos (quod unum in oratore dominatur,) sine *diligentissima pervestigatione* earum omnium rationum quæ de *naturis* humani generis, ac moribus, a philosophis explicantur.—*De Orat. lib.* i. § 14. Quare hic locus de vita et moribus, totus est oratori perdiscendus. *Ibid.* § 15.

† Bibliothecas mehercule omnium philosophorum unus mihi videtur duodecim tabularum libellus, si quis *legum* fontes, et capita viderit, et auctoritatis pondere, et utilitatis ubertate superare. Ac si nos, id quod maxime debet, nostra patria delectat.—Cujus primum nobis mens, mos, disciplina nota esse debet; vel quia est patria, parens omnium nostrum, vel quia tanta sapientia fuisse in jure constituendo putanda est, quanta fuit in his tantis operibus imperii comparandis. *De Orat. lib.* i. § 44.

‡ Nec vero dialecticis modo sit instructus, sed habeat omnes philosophiæ notos, et tractatos locos. Nihil enim de religione, nihil de morte, nihil de pietate, nihil de caritate patriæ; nihil de bonis rebus, aut malis; nihil de virtutibus, aut vitiis—nihil, inquam, sine ea scientia, quam dixi, graviter, ample, copiose dici, et explicari potest. *Orat.* § 33.

eloquence, if we should separate it from philosophy: for then, instead of wise orators, we should have only trifling, injudicious declaimers. He further requires not only an exact knowledge of all the principles of ethics; but likewise that the orator be fully acquainted with antiquity.* He recommends the careful perusal of the ancient Greek writers, especially the historians; both for their style, and for the historical facts they relate. He particularly enjoins† the study of the poets: because of the great resemblance there is between the figures of poetry, and those of eloquence. In fine, he often declares that an orator ought to furnish his mind with a clear, comprehensive view of things, before he attempt to speak in public. I fancy I could almost repeat some of his words on this subject; so often have I read them; and so strong an impression did they make on my thoughts. You will be surprised to see how much knowledge, and how many‡

* Cognoscat etiam rerum gestarum et memoriæ veteris ordinem, maxime scilicet nostræ civitatis; sed et imperiosorum populorum et regum illustrium—nescire enim quid antea, quam natus sis, acciderit, id est semper esse puerum—commemoratio autem antiquitatis, exemplorumque prolatio summa cum delectatione, et auctoritatem orationi affert, et fidem. *Orat.* § 34.—Apud Græcos autem eloquentissimi homines remoti a causis forensibus, cum ad cæteras res illustres, tum ad scribendam historiam maxime se applicaverunt. Namque et Herodotus—et post illum Thucydides omnes dicendi artificio mea sententia facile vicit—denique etiam a philosophia profectus princeps Xenophon.—*De Orat. lib.* ii. § 13, 14.

† Legendi etiam poetæ, cognoscenda historia, omnium bonarum artium scriptores.—*De Orat. lib.* i. § 34. Est enim finitimus oratori poeta, numeris adstrictior paulo, verborum autem licentia liberior; multis vero ornandi generibus socius ac pene par; in hoc quidem certe prope idem, nullis ut terminis circumscribat aut definiat jus suum, quo minus ei liceat eadem illa facultate, et copia vagari qua velit.—*Ibid* § 16.

‡ Non quæritur mobilitas linguæ, non celeritas verborum, non denique ea quæ nobis non possumus fingere, facies, vultus, sonus. In oratore autem acumen dialecticorum, sententiæ philosophorum, verba prope poetarum, memoria juris consultorum, vox tragœdorum, gestus pene summorum actorum, est requirendus. Quamobrem nihil in hominum genere rarius perfecto oratore inveniri

qualities he requires. 'An orator,' says he, 'ought to have the acuteness of logicians, the knowledge of philosophers, the style almost of the poets, the elocution and gesture of the finest actors.' Consider now how much application is necessary to attain all this.

C. I have observed, indeed, on several occasions, that some orators, though they have good natural parts, want a fund of solid knowledge. Their heads seem unfurnished; and one cannot but perceive they labour hard for matter to fill up their discources. They do not seem to speak from the abundance of their hearts, as if they were full of useful truths: but they talk as if they were at a loss for the very next thing they are to say.

A. Cicero takes notice of these kind of people; who live always, as it were, from hand to mouth, without laying up any stock of provision. But the discourses of such declaimers appear always thin and half-starved, whatever pains they take about them. Though these men could afford three months for studying a public harangue, such particular preparations, however troublesome, must needs be very imperfect: and any judicious hearer will easily discern their defects. They ought to have employed several years in laying up a plentiful store of solid notions: and then after such a general preparation, their particular discourses would cost them but little pains. Whereas, if a man, without this preparatory study, lay out all his application upon particular subjects, he is forced to put off his hearers with florid* expres-

potest: quæ enim singularum rerum artifices, singula si mediocriter adepti sunt, probantur, ea nisi omnia summa sunt in oratore, probari non possunt. *De Orat. lib.* i. § 28.

* There are two extremes to be avoided with the utmost care; the frigid style, and the boyish. The former renders a discourse dry and insipid, by a languor and flatness of expression; the latter renders it ungrateful and shocking, by

sions, gaudy metaphors, and jingling antitheses. He delivers nothing but indeterminate common-place notions; and patches together shreds of learning and rhetoric, which any one may see were not made one for another. He never goes to the bottom of things, but stops in superficial remarks, and oft-times in false ones. He is not able to show truths in their proper light, and full extent; because all general truths are necessarily connected among themselves; so that one must understand almost all of them, before he can treat judiciously of any one.

C. However, many of our public speakers get repute by those slight attainments you so much despise.

A. It is true, they are applauded by women and the undiscerning multitude, who are easily dazzled and imposed on: but this repute is very precarious; and could not subsist long, if it were not supported by a cabal of acquaintance, and the zeal or humour of a party. They who know the true end and rules of eloquence,* cannot

a swelling loftiness, and affected amplification. Those who use the frigid style, employ pompous expressions when the subject requires plain ones; and they who affect the boyish style, make use of low expressions when the matter requires the loftiest. But our language is become so modest, so reserved, and so scrupulous, that the frigid style includes all such expressions as are too strong or too sparkling; too bold and hardy metaphors, and frequent turns of wit. And the boyish style comprehends strokes of humour, and quaint conceits upon serious subjects; too loose and heavy repetitions in those parts of a discourse that ought to be close and concise; too violent exaggerations, and too laborious figures. RAPIN. Reflections sur l'Eloquence.

* Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable;
A low conceit in pompous words exprest,
Is like a clown in regal purple drest.
For different styles with different subjects sort,
As several garbs with country, town and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence;
Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense!
Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style,
Amaze th' unlearned, and make the learned smile.

POPE.

hear such empty, vain haranguers, without satiety, disgust, and contempt.

C. It seems then you would have a man wait several years before he attempt to speak in public; for the flower of his age must be spent in attaining that vast fund of knowledge, which you reckon necessary to an orator: and then he must be so far advanced in years, that he will have but little time to exert his talents.

A. I would have him begin to exert them betimes: for I know very well how great the power of action is. But under the pretence of exercising his parts, I would not have him immediately engage himself in any kind of employment that will take off his mind from his studies. A youth may try his skill, from time to time: but for several years, a careful perusal of the best authors ought to be his main business.

C. Your judicious observation puts me in mind of a preacher I am acquainted with; who lives, as you say, from hand to mouth; and never thinks of any subject till he be obliged to treat of it; and then he shuts himself up in his closet, turns over his concordance, combefix, and polyanthea, his collections of sermons; and common-place book of separate sentences and book quotations thathe has gathered together.

A. You cannot but perceive, Sir, that this method will never make him an able, judicious preacher. In such cases, a man cannot talk with strength and clearness; he is not sure of any thing he says; nor doth any thing flow easily from him. His whole discourse has a borrowed air; and looks like an awkward piece of patchwork. Certainly those are much to be blamed, who are so impatiently fond of showing their parts.

B. Before you leave us, Sir, pray tell us what you reckon the chief effect of eloquence.

A. Plato says an oration is so far eloquent as it affects the hearer's mind. By this rule you may judge certainly of any discourse you hear; if an harangue leave you cold and languid; and only amuses your mind, instead of enlightening it; if it does not move your heart and passions, however florid and pompous it may be, it is not truly eloquent. Tully approves of Plato's sentiments on this point; and tells us* that the whole drift and force of a discourse should tend to move those secret springs of action that nature has placed in the hearts of men. Would you then consult your own mind to know whether those you hear be truly eloquent? If they make a lively impression upon you, and gain your attention and assent to what they say; if they move and animate your passions, so as to raise you above yourself,† you may be assured they are true orators. But if instead of affecting you thus, they only please or divert you, and make you admire the brightness of their thoughts, or the beauty and propriety of their language, you may freely pronounce them to be mere declaimers.

B. Stay a little, Sir, if you please, till I ask you a few more questions.

A. I wish I could stay longer, gentlemen; for your conversation is very engaging; but I have an affair to despatch which will not admit of a delay. Tomorrow I will wait on you again: and then we shall finish this subject at our leisure.

B. Adieu, then, Sir, till tomorrow.

* Lib. i. § 5. lib. ii. § 82. † See Longinus, § vii.

SECOND DIALOGUE.

B. You are extremely kind, Sir, in coming so punctually. Your conversation yesterday was so agreeably instructive, that we longed impatiently to hear you again upon the same subject.

C. For my part, I made what haste I could, lest I should have come too late; for I was unwilling to lose any part of your discourse.

A. Such conferences are very useful, among those who really love truth, and talk with temper; for then they exchange their best thoughts, and express them as clearly as they can. As for myself, gentlemen, I find an advantage in conversing with you; seeing you are not displeased at the freedom I take.

B. Let us leave off compliments, Sir; I know best how to judge of myself; and I perceive clearly that without your assistance I should have continued in several errors. I entreat you, Sir, to go on, and set me entirely right in my notions of eloquence.

A. Your mistakes, (if you will allow me to call them so,) prevail among most people of worth and learning, who have not examined this matter to the bottom.

B. Let us lose no time in preamble; we shall have a thousand things to say. Proceed, therefore, Sir, to rectify my mistakes; and begin at the point where we left off yesterday.

A. Of what point were we talking, when we parted? I have really forgot.

C. You were speaking of that kind of eloquence which consists entirely in moving the passions.

B. Yes; but I could not well comprehend that the whole design of rhetoric is to move the passions. Is that your opinion, Sir?

A. By no means.

C. It seems then I mistook you yesterday.

A. What would you say of a man, who should persuade without any proof; and affect his hearers, without enlightening them? You could not reckon him a true orator. He might seduce people by this art of persuading them to what he would, without showing them that what he recommends is right. Such a person must prove very dangerous in the commonwealth; as we have seen before from the reasoning of Socrates.

B. It is very true.

A. But on the other hand, what would you think of a man, who in his public discourses should demonstrate the truth, in a plain, dry, exact, methodical manner; or make use of the geometrical way of reasoning; without adding any thing to adorn or enliven his discourse? Would you reckon him an orator?

B. No; I should think him a philosopher only.

A. To make a complete orator then, we must find a philosopher, who knows both how to demonstrate any truth; and at the same time, to give his accurate reasoning all the natural beauty and vehemence of an agreeable, moving discourse, to render it entirely eloquent. And herein lies the difference between the clear, convincing method of philosophy, and the affecting, persuasive art of eloquence.

C. What do you say is the difference?

A. I say a philosopher's aim is merely to demonstrate the truth, and gain your assent; while the orator not only convinces your judgment, but commands your passions.

C. I do not take your meaning exactly, yet. When a hearer is fully convinced, what is there more to be done?

A. There is still wanting what an orator would do more than a metaphysician, in proving the existence of God. The metaphysician would give you a plain demonstration of it; and stop at the speculative view of that important truth. But the orator would further add whatever is proper to excite the most affecting sentiments in your mind; and make you love that glorious Being whose existence he had proved. And this is what we call persuasion.

C. Now I understand you perfectly well.

A. You see then what reason Cicero had to say, that we must never separate philosophy from eloquence. For, the art of persuading without wisdom, and previous instruction, must be pernicious: and wisdom alone, without the art of persuasion, can never have a sufficient influence on the minds of men; nor allure them to the love and practice of virtue. I thought it proper to observe this by the by, to show you how much those of the last age were mistaken in their notions of this matter. For, on the one hand there were some men of polite learning, who valued nothing but the purity of languages, and books elegantly written; but having no solid principles of knowledge, with their politeness and erudition, they were generally libertines. On the other hand, there were a set of dry, formal scholars, who de-

livered their instructions in such a perplexed, dogmatical, unaffecting manner as disgusted every body. Excuse this digression. I return now to the point; and must remind you that persuasion has this advantage beyond mere conviction, or demonstration; that it not only sets truth in the fullest light, but represents it as amiable; and engages men to love and pursue it.* The whole art of eloquence, therefore, consists in enforcing the clearest proofs of any truth, with such powerful motives as may affect the hearers, and employ their passions to just and worthy ends; to raise their indignation at ingratitude; their horror against cruelty; their compassion for the miserable; their love of virtue; and to direct every other passion to its proper objects. This is what Plato calls affecting the minds of an audience; and moving their bowels. Do you understand me, Sir?

B. Very plainly; and I see too that eloquence is not a trifling invention to amuse and dazzle people with pompous language; but that it is a very serious art; and serviceable to morality.

A. It is both a serious and a difficult art. For which reason Tully said he had heard several persons declaim in an elegant, engaging manner; but that there were but very few complete orators, who knew how to seize and captivate the heart.

C. I am not surprised at that; for I see but very few who aim at it; nay, I freely own that Cicero him-

*—Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi; quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi in eorum qui audiunt, mentibus aut sedandis, aut excitandis, exprimenda est. Cic. *De Orat. lib.* i. § 5. Maximaque pars orationis admovenda est ad animorum motus nonnunquam aut cohortatione, aut commemoratione, aliqua, aut in spem, aut in metum, aut ad cupiditatem, aut ad gloriam concitandos: sæpe etiam a temeritate, iracundia, spe, injuria, credulitate revocandos. *Ibid. lib.* ii. § 82.

self, who lays down this rule, seems oftentimes to forget it. What do you think of those rhetorical flowers with which he embellished his harangues? They might amuse the fancy, but could not touch the heart.

A. We must distinguish, Sir, between Tully's orations. Those he composed in his youth, (when he chiefly aimed at establishing his character,) have oft-times the gay defect you speak of. He was then full of ambition; and far more concerned for his own fame, than for the justice of his cause. And this will always be the case when people employ one to plead for them, who regards their business no farther than as it gives him an opportunity of distinguishing himself, and of shining in his profession. Thus we find that among the Romans their pleading at the bar, was oft-times nothing else but a pompous declamation. After all we must own that Tully's* youthful and most elaborate orations show a

* Nunc causa perorata, res ipsa et periculi magnitudo, C. Aquilli, cogere videtur, ut te, atque eos, qui tibi in consilio sunt, obsecret, obtesteterque P. Quintius per senectutem ac solitudinem suam, nihil aliud, nisi ut vestræ naturæ, bonitatique obsequamini; ut, cum veritas hæc faciat, plus hujus inopia possit ad misericordiam quam illius opes ad crudelitatem—si quæ pudore ornamenta sibi peperit, Nævi, ea potest contra petulantiam, te defendente, obtinere; spes est et hunc miserum atque infelicem aliquando tandem posse consistere. Sin et poterit Maevius id quod libet; et ei libebit, quod non licet; quid agendum est? Qui Deus appellandus est? Cujus hominis fides imploranda?—Ab ipso [Naevio] repudiatus, ab amicis ejus non snblevatus; ab omni magistratu agitatus atque perterritus, quem præter te appellet, [C. Aquilli] habet neminem; tibi se, tibi suas omnes opes, fortunasque commendat; tibi committit existimationem ac spem reliquæ vitæ. Multis vexatus contumeliis, plurimis jactatus injuriis non *turpis* ad te, sed *miser* confugit; e fundo ornatissimo dejectus, ignominiis omnibus appetitus—itaque te hoc obsecrat, C. Aquilli, ut quam existimationem, quam honestatem injudicium tuum, prope acta jam ætate decursaque attulit, eam liceat ei secum ex hoc loco efferre; ne is, de cujus officio nemo unquam dubitavit, sexagesimo denique anno, dedecore, macula, turpissimaque ignominia notetur; ne ornamentis ejus omnibus, Sex. Naevius pro spoliis abutatur; ne per te ferat, quo minus, quæ existimatio P. Quintium usque ad senectutem perduxit, eadem usque ad rogum prosequatur. *Cic. Orat. pro P. Quintio.*

great deal of his moving and persuasive art. But to form a just notion of it, we must observe the harangues he made in his more advanced age, for the necessities of the republic. For then, the experience he had in the weightiest affairs, the love of liberty, and the fear of those calamities that hung over his head, made him display the utmost efforts of his eloquence. When he endeavoured to support and revive expiring liberty, and to animate the commonwealth against Anthony, his enemy; you do not see him use points of wit and quaint antitheses: he is then truly eloquent. Every thing seems artless, as it ought to be, when one is vehement. With a negligent air, he delivers the most natural and affecting sentiments; and says every thing that can move and animate the passions.

C. You have often spoke of witty conceits and quaint turns. Pray, what do you mean by these expressions? For I can scarce distinguish those witty turns from the other ornaments of discourse. In my opinion, all the embellishments of speech flow from wit, and a vigorous fancy.

A. But Tully thinks, there are many expressions that owe all their beauty and ornament to their force and propriety; and to the nature of the subject they are applied to.

C. I do not exactly understand these terms; be pleased to show me in a familiar way, how I may readily distinguish between a flash of wit, (or quaint turn,) and a solid ornament, or noble, delicate thought.*

* True wit is *nature* to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
Something, whose *truth* convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.

A. Reading and observation will teach you best: there are a hundred different sorts of witty conceits.

C. But pray, Sir, tell me at least some general mark by which I may know them: is it affectation?

A. Not every kind of affectation, but a fond desire to please, and show one's wit.

C. This gives me some little light; but I want still some distinguishing marks, to direct my judgment.

A. I will give you one then, which perhaps will satisfy you. We have seen that eloquence consists not only in giving clear, convincing proofs; but likewise in the art of moving the passions. Now in order to move them, we must be able to paint them well; with their various objects and effects. So that I think the whole art of oratory may be reduced to proving, painting, and raising the passions. Now all those pretty, sparkling, quaint thoughts that do not tend to one of these ends, are only witty conceits.*

C. What do you mean by painting? I never heard that term applied to rhetoric.

A. To paint,† is not only to describe things; but to

As shades more sweetly recommend the light;
So *modest plainness* sets off *sprightly wit.*
For works may have more wit than does them good;
As bodies perish through excess of blood.

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

* I cannot forbear warning you, in the most earnest manner, against endeavouring at wit in your sermons, because, by the strictest computation, it is very near a million to one that you have none; and because too many of your calling have consequently made themselves everlastingly ridiculous by attempting it. I remember several young men in this town, who could never leave the pulpit under half a dozen conceits; and this faculty adhered to those gentlemen a longer or a shorter time, exactly in proportion to their several degrees of dulness; accordingly, I am told that some of them retain it to this day. I heartily wish the brood were at an end. *Swift's Letter to a Young Clergyman.*

† See Longinus, § xv

represent the circumstances of them, in such a lively,* sensible manner, that the hearer shall fancy he almost sees them with his eyes. For instance; if a dry historian were to give an account of Dido's death, he would only say, she was overwhelmed with sorrow after the departure of Æneas; and that she grew weary of her life, so went up to the top of her palace, and, lying down on her funeral pile, she stabbed herself. Now these words would inform you of the fact; but you do not see it. When you read the story in Virgil, he sets it before your eyes.† When he represents all the circumstances of Dido's despair; describes her wild rage; and death already staring in her aspect; when he makes her speak at the sight of the picture and sword that Æneas left, your imagination transports you to Carthage; where you see the Trojan fleet leaving the shore, and the queen quite inconsolable. You enter into all her passions, and into the sentiments of the supposed spectators. It is not Virgil you then hear: you are too attentive to the last words of unhappy Dido, to think of him. The poet disappears; and we see only what he describes; and hear those only whom he makes to speak. Such is the force of a natural imitation, and of painting in language. Hence it comes that the painters and the poets are so nearly related; the one paints for the eyes; and the other for the ears: but both of them

* Plus est evidentia, vel ut alii dicunt, repraesentatio, quam perspicuitas; et illud quidem patet; haec se quodammodo ostendit—magna virtus est, res de quibus loquimur, clare atque ut *cerni videantur*, enunciare. Non enim satis efficit, neque ut debet plene dominatur oratio, si usque ad aures volet, atque ea sibi judex de quibus cognoscit, *narrari* credit, non *exprimi*, et *oculis* mentis *ostendi*—atque hujus summae, judicio quidem meo, virtutis facillima est via. *Naturam* intueamur, hanc *sequamur*. *Quintil. lib.* viii. c. 3.

† Æneid, lib. iv.

ought to convey the liveliest pictures to people's imagination. I have taken an example from a poet to give you a livelier image of what I mean by painting in eloquence: for poets paint in a stronger manner than orators. Indeed the main thing in which poetry differs from eloquence is, that the poet paints with enthusiasm, and gives bolder touches than the orator. But prose allows of painting in a moderate degree; for, without lively descriptions, it is impossible to warm the hearer's fancy, or to stir his passions. A plain narrative does not move people: we must not only inform them of facts; but strike their senses,* by a lively, moving representation of the manner and circumstances of the facts we relate.

C. I never reflected on this before. But seeing what you call painting is essential to oratory; does it not follow that there can be no true eloquence, without a due mixture of poetry?

A. You are right: only we must exclude versification; that is, a strict regard to the quantity of syllables, and the order of words in which the poet is obliged to express his thoughts, according to the measure or verse he writes in. Versification indeed, if it be in rhyme, is

* Της δε ῥητορικης φαντασιας καλλιστον αει το εμπρακτον και εναληθες. Καλειται μεν γαρ κοινως φαντασια παν εννοημα λογου γεννητικον ὁπωσδν παριστάμενον· ιδιως δ' επι τουτων κεκρατηκε τουνομα, ὁταν ἁ λεγῃς ὑπο ενθουσιασμου και παθους βλεπειν δοκῃς, και ὑπ' οψιν τιθῃς τοις ακουουσιν. Τι ουν ἡ ῥητορικη φαντασια δυναται; πολλα μεν ισως και αλλα τοις λογοις εναγωνια και εμπαθη προσεισφερειν· κατακιρναμενη μεντοι ταις πραγματικαις επιχειρησεσιν, ου πειθει τον ακροατην μονον, αλλα και δουλουται. LONGINUS, § XV.

what injudicious people reckon to be the whole of poetry. Some fancy themselves to be poets, because they have spoken or writ in measured words; but there are many who make verses without poetry; and others are very poetical without making verses.* If therefore we set versifying aside, poetry in other respects is only a lively fiction that paints nature. And if one has not this genius for painting, he will never be able to imprint things on the hearer's mind: but his discourse will be flat, languid, and wearisome. Ever since the fall of Adam, man's thoughts have been so low and grovelling, that they are unattentive to moral truths; and can scarce conceive any thing but what affects their senses. In this consists the degeneracy of human nature. People grow soon weary of contemplation; intellectual ideas do not strike their imagination; so that we must use sensible and familiar images to support their attention, and convey abstracted truths to their minds.† Hence it came, that soon after the fall, the religion of all the ancients consisted of poetry and idolatry; which were always joined together in their various schemes of superstition. But let us not wander too far—you see plainly that poetry, I mean, the lively painting of things, is, as it were, the very soul of eloquence.

* The adventures of Telemachus, composed by our ingenious author, are entirely written in that poetic prose he here speaks of. M. Bossu, the greatest modern critic, does not think that work can be called a poem; but he owns the distinction that our author here takes notice of. 'There is good reason, says he, to distinguish such artless composures (turned into verse) from true poetry, by giving them the name of versification; and to make of versification and poetry, as it were, two different arts. And indeed, is there a greater difference between grammar and rhetoric, than between the art of making verses, and that of inventing a poem?' *Traite du poeme epique*, liv. i. ch. 5.

† Respicere exemplar vitæ morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.
Hor. de A. P.

C. But if true orators be poets, I should think that poets are orators too; for poetry is very proper to persuade.

A. Yes; they have the very same end. All the difference between them consists in what I have told you. Orators are not possessed with that enthusiasm, which fires the poet's breast, and renders him more lively, more sublime, and bolder in expression. You remember the passage I quoted from Cicero.

C. Which? is it not—

A. That an orator ought to have the style almost of a poet; that almost points out the difference between them.

C. I understand you. But you do not come to the point you proposed to explain to us.

A. Which?

C. The rule for distinguishing between witty turns and solid ornaments.

A. You will soon comprehend that. For of what use in discourse can any ornament be, that does not tend either to prove, to paint, or to affect?

C. It may serve to please.

A. We must distinguish here between such ornaments as only please; and those that both please and persuade. That, which serves to please in order to persuade, is good and solid: thus we are pleased with strong and clear arguments. The just and natural emotions of an orator have much grace and beauty in them: and his exact and lively painting charms us. So that all the necessary parts of eloquence are apt to please; but yet pleasing is not their true aim. The question is, whether we shall approve such thoughts and expressions as may perhaps give an amusing delight; but in other

respects, are altogether useless: and these I call quaint turns, and points of wit. You must remember now that I allow all those graces of style, and delicate thoughts that tend to persuasion: I only reject those vain, affected ornaments that the self-conceited author uses, to paint his own character, and amuse others with his wit: instead of filling their minds entirely with his subject. In fine; I think we ought to condemn not only all jingle and playing with words, as a thing extremely mean and boyish; but even all witty conceits, and fanciful turns; I mean, such thoughts as only flash and glitter upon the fancy; but contain nothing that is solid, and conducive to persuasion.

C. I could agree to that; but that I am afraid such severity would retrench the chief beauties of discourse.

A. Do not you reckon Homer and Virgil very agreeable authors? are they not the most delicate you ever read? and yet in them you do not find what we call points of wit. Their poems are full of a noble simplicity: their art is entirely concealed:* nature itself appears in all that they say. We do not find a single word that seems purposely designed to shew the poet's wit. They thought it their greatest glory never to appear; but to employ our attention on the objects they describe: as a painter endeavours to set before your eyes wide forests, mountains, rivers, distant views, and buildings; or the

* When first young *Maro* sung of kings and wars,
'Ere warning Phœbus touch'd his trembling ears,
Perhaps he seem'd above the critic's law,
And but from nature's fountains scorn'd to draw;
But when t' examine every part he came,
Nature and *Homer* were, he found, the same.
Learn hence for ancient rules a just esteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.

Pope.

adventures, actions, and different passions of men, in such a lively manner, that you cannot trace the masterly strokes of his pencil: for art looks mean and coarse when it is perceived. Plato, (who had examined this matter more thoroughly than any other orator, or critic,) assures us that in composing, the poet should always keep out of sight, make himself be quite forgot by his readers, and represent only those things and persons, which he would set before their eyes. You see how much the ancients excelled us in just and lofty sentiments.

B. I see the use and necessity of painting, in eloquence: let us next know the nature and use of those affecting movements you spoke of.

A. They serve to raise in the hearer's mind such emotions as answer the orator's purpose.

C. But in what do these movements of an orator consist?

A. In his words, and in the actions of his body.

B. What movement can there be in words?

A. A great deal. Tully tells us, that the very enemies of Gracchus could not forbear weeping when he pronounced these words*—'Miserable man that I am! Whither shall I turn myself? Where can I go? to the Capitol? it swims with my brother's blood. Shall I go to my own house? there to see my unhappy mother dissolved in tears, and oppressed with sorrow?' This is moving language. But now if one were to say the same things in a cold manner, they would lose all their force.

* Quid fuit in *Graccho*, quem tu, *Catule*, melius meministi, quod me puero tantopere ferretur? *quo me miser conferam? quo vertam? in Capitoliumne? at fratris sanguine redundat. An domum? matremne ut miseram lamentantemque videam, et abjectam?* quæ sic ab illo *acta* esse constabat oculis, voce, gestu, inimici ut lachrymas tenere non possent. Hæc eo dico pluribus, quod genus hoc totum oratores, qui sunt veritatis ipsius *actores*, reliquerunt; imitatores, autem veritatis histriones, occupaverunt. Cic. *de Orat.* lib. iii. § 56.

B. Think you so?

A. Let us try. 'I know not where to go, nor whither I should turn myself, amidst my misfortunes. The Capitol is the place where my brother's blood was shed: and at home, I shall see my unhappy mother lamenting her condition, with the utmost grief.' This is the same thing that was said before: but what is become of that force and vivacity we then perceived? Where is that* vehement manner, and abrupt language, which so justly describes nature in the transports of grief? The manner of saying a thing shews us how it affects the mind; and that is what most effectually touches the hearer. In such passages, one ought studiously to avoid all refined, uncommon thoughts; and even neglect connexion and order: otherwise the passion described has no appearance of truth, or nature, in it. Nothing is more shocking than a passion expressed in beautiful figures, pompous language, and well turned periods. On this head I must recommend Longinus† to you, who quotes many sublime examples from Demosthenes and others.

C. Besides the movements that attend an affecting, vehement style, you mentioned others that flow from the orator's gesture and action; which I must entreat you to explain.

A. I cannot pretend to give you a complete system of rhetoric. It is a task I am not fit for. However I shall give you some remarks I have made on the point of gesture, we find in Tully and Quintillian,‡ that the action of the Greeks and Romans was far more violent

* See Longinns, § xviii. † See Longinus, § xviii, xix, xx, xxi.

‡ Femur ferire, quod Athenis primus fecisse creditur *Cleon*, et usitatum est, et indignatos decet, et excitat auditorem. Idque in Callidio Cicero desiderat. *Non frons*, inquit, *percussa? non femur? pedum nulla supplosio?* *Quint.*

than ours. They stamped on the ground; and even beat their forehead. Tully mentions an orator, who in his pleading laid hold of his client, and tore open his clothes to show the judges the wounds he had received in the service of the republic. This was a vehement kind of action indeed; but such as is reserved for extraordinary occasions; and doth not fall within the common rules of gesture. I think it is not natural to be always moving one's arm in talking; that motion* is proper enough when the orator is very vehement: but he ought not to move his arm in order to appear vehement. Nay, there are many things that ought to be pronounced calmly, and without any motion.

B. Would you have a preacher, for instance, use no gesture at all on some occasions? that would look very strange indeed.

A. I know that most people lay it down for a rule, (or a custom at least,) that a preacher should be always in motion, whatever the subject be that he treats of. But it might be easily shown that our [French] preachers usually have too much gesture, and sometimes too little.

B. I wish you would state this matter clearly. For I always believed, from the example of *** that there are not above two or three motions of the hands to be used in a whole sermon.

A. Let us then lay down some principle to argue upon. Now of what use is the action of the body† in

* Brachii moderata projectio remissis humeris, atque explicantibus se in proferenda manu digitis, continuos et decurrentes locos maxime decet. *Ibid.*

† Actio inquam in dicendo una dominatur; sine hac summus orator esse in numero nullo potest; mediocris, hac instructus summos saepe superare. Huic primas dedisse Demosthenes dicitur, quum rogaretur quid in dicendo esset primum; huic secundas; huic tertias. *De Orat. lib.* iii. § 56. Est enim *actio*

speaking? Is it not to express the sentiments and passions of the mind?

B. I think so.

A. The motion of the body then should help to paint the thoughts of the soul.

B. Yes.

A. And that painting ought to be exact and faithful.* Every look and motion should in an easy, natural manner represent the speaker's sentiments, and the nature of the things he says; but so as to avoid all mean and theatrical gestures.

B. I think I understand your notion exactly. Let me interrupt you then a little; that you may see how far I enter into the consequences that flow from the principle you laid down. You† would have an orator use such a lively, natural, becoming action, as will help to point out distinctly what his words alone could express only in a flat and languid manner. So that you reckon his very action a sort of painting.‡

quasi *sermo corporis;* quo magis menti congrua esse debet—atque in iis omnibus quæ sunt actionis, inest quædam vis a natura data; quare etiam hac imperiti, hac vulgus, hac denique barbari maxime commoventur—iisdem enim omnium animi motibus concitantur, et eos iisdem notis, et in aliis agnoscunt, et in se ipsi indicant. *Ibid.* § 54.

* Omnis enim motus animi suum quendam a natura habet vultum et sonum, et gestum; totumque corpus hominis, et ejus omnis vultus omnesque voces, ut nervi in fidibus, ita sonant, ut a motu animi quoque sint pulsæ. *Cicero.*

† Gestus quantum habeat in oratore momenti, satis vel ex eo patet quod pleraque etiam citra verba significat. Quippe non manus solum, sed nutus etiam declarant nostram voluntatem; et in mutis pro sermone sunt—contra si gestus ac vultus ab oratione dissentiat, tristia dicamus hilares, affirmemus aliqua renuentes, non auctoritas modo verbis, sed etiam fides desit. *Quint. lib.* xi. c. 3.

‡ Our preachers stand stock still in the pulpit, and will not so much as move a finger to set off the best sermons in the world. Our words flow from us in a smooth, continued stream, without those strainings of the voice, motions of the body, and majesty of the hand, which are so much celebrated in the orators of

A. Right. But we must farther conclude that to paint well, we must imitate nature; and observe what she does when she is left to herself; and is not constrained by art.

B. That is plain.

A. Now, doth a man naturally use many gestures when he says common things, without vehemence, or the least mixture of any sort of passion?

B. No.

A. On such common subjects then, we ought not to use any action in public discourses; or at least but little; for there we ought always to follow nature;* nay, there are some occasions where an orator might best express his thoughts by silence. For, if, being full of some great sentiment, he continued immoveable for a moment; this surprising pause would keep the minds of the audience in suspense, and express an emotion too big for words to utter.

B. I doubt not but such unexpected pauses seasonably employed, would be very significant; and powerful-

Greece and Rome. We can talk of life and death in cold blood, and keep our temper, in a discourse which turns upon every thing that is dear to us. Though our zeal breaks out in the finest tropes and figures, it is not able to stir a limb about us. I have heard it observed more than once, by those who have seen Italy, that an untravelled Englishman cannot relish all the beauties of Italian pictures, because the postures which are expressed in them are often such as are peculiar to that country. One, who has not seen an Italian in the pulpit, will not know what to make of that noble gesture in Raphael's picture of St. Paul, preaching at Athens, where the apostle is represented as lifting up both his arms, and pouring out the thunder of his rhetoric, amidst an audience of pagan philosophers. *Addison.*

* Unum jam his adjiciendum est, cum præcipue in actione spectetur *decorum*, sæpe aliud alios decere. Est enim latens quædam in hoc ratio, et inenarrabilis: et ut vere hoc dictum est caput esse artis, decere quod facias—quare norit se quisque; nec tantum ex communibus præceptis, sed etiam ex natura sua capiat consilium formandae actionis. *Quint. lib.* xi. c. 3.

ly affect the hearers. But, Sir, you seem to think that one, who speaks in public, ought to use no other action than what is proper for ordinary conversation.

A. You mistake me, Sir; I think the sight of a great assembly, and the importance of the subject an orator treats of, ought to animate him far more than if he were talking familiarly with his friends. But both in private and in public, he ought always to act naturally. He should use some action when his words are moving: but when his expressions are quite calm and simple, there is no occasion to move the body; except it be in the gentlest manner. Nothing appears more shocking and absurd, than to see a man very warm and active, when he is saying the driest, coldest things. Though he sweats himself, he chills the blood of his audience. Some time ago, I happened to fall asleep at a sermon, as you know one is apt to do in the afternoon: (and indeed in former times, they preached but once a-day, after the gospel in the morning service:) but I soon waked and found the preacher in a very violent agitation, so that I fancied, at first, that he was pressing some important point of morality—

B. What was the matter then?

A. He was only giving notice, that on the Sunday following he would preach upon repentance. I was extremely surprised to hear such an indifferent thing uttered with so much vehemence; and must have laughed out, if the regard I had for the place, and some other circumstances had not restrained me. The pronunciation of these declaimers is exactly like their gesture: for, as their voice is a perpetual monotony; so there is an uniformity in their gesture,* that is no less nauseous

* In the delivering of sermons, a great composure of gesture and behaviour

and unnatural; and equally contrary to the good effect that one might expect from decent action.

B. You said that sometimes they have not action enough.

A. We cannot wonder at that. For they do not discern the things that require warmth and earnestness. They waste their spirits in saying the plainest things; and so are forced to utter those things faintly which ought to be delivered with a vehement action. I must own indeed that the French are not very capable of this vehemence: for, they are too airy, and do not conceive things with sufficient strength; and therefore they do not speak with a proper energy. The Romans had a wonderful talent this way, and the Greeks a greater. The eastern nations excelled in it; and particularly the Hebrews. Nothing can equal the strength and vivacity of the figures they employed in their discourse; and the very actions they used to express their sentiments; such as putting ashes on their heads, and tearing their garments, and covering themselves with sackloth, under any deep distress and sorrow of mind. I do not speak of what the prophets did to give a more lively represen-

is necessary to give them weight and authority. Extremes are bad here, as in every thing else. Some affect a light and flippant behaviour; and others think that wry faces, and a tone in the voice will set off the matter. Grave and composed looks, and a natural, but distinct pronunciation, will always have the best effects. The great rule which the masters of rhetoric press much, can never be enough remembered, that to make a man speak well, and pronounce with a right *emphasis*, he ought thoroughly to understand all that he says; be fully persuaded of it; and bring himself to have those affections, which he desires to infuse into others. He that is persuaded of the truth of what he says, and has a concern about it in his mind, will pronounce with a natural vehemence, that is far more lively than all the strains that art can lead him to. An orator, (if we hearken to them) must be an honest man, and speak always on the side of truth; and study to feel all that he says; and then he will speak it *so* as to make others feel it likewise. *Discourse of the pastoral care*, chap. ix.

tation of the things they foretold; because such figurative actions were the effect of divine inspiration. But even in other cases, we find that those people understood much better than we do, how to express their grief, and fear, and other passions. And hence, no doubt arose those surprising effects of elequence, which we never experience now.

B. You approve then of many different gestures, and various inflections of the voice?*

A. It is that variety, which gives so much grace and force to the action of an orator; and made Demosthenes far excel all others. The more easy and familiar that the voice and action appear, when the speaker only narrates, explains, or instructs, the more apt he will be to surprise and move the audience in those parts of his discourse, where he grows suddenly vehement, and enforces lofty, affecting sentiments, by a suitable energy of voice, and action. This due pronunciation† is a kind of

* In omni voce, est quiddam medinm; sed suum cuique; hinc gradatim adscendere vocem utile, et suave est; (nam a principio clamare agreste quiddam est;) et illud idem ad formandum est vocem salutare; deinde est quiddam contentius extremum—est item contra quiddam in remissione gravissimum, quoque tamquam sonorum gradibus descenditur. Hæc varietas, et hic per omnes sonos vocis cursus, et se tuebitur, et actioni afferet suavitatem.

Cic. de Orat. lib. iii. § 61.

† Ornata est pronuntiatio, cui suffragatur vox facilis, magna, beata, flexibilis, firma, dulcis, durabilis, clara pura, secans æra, auribus sedens. Est enim quædam ad auditum accommodata, non magnitudine sed proprietate, ad hoc velut tractabilis; utique habens omnes in se qui desiderantur sonos *intentionesque*, et toto ut aiunt organo instructa—illud vero maximum, quod secundum *rationem rerum* de quibus dicimus, animorumque habitus, *conformanda vox* est, ne ab oratione discordet. Vitemus igitur illam quæ *Græce* μονοτονία vocatur, una quædam spiritus ac soni intentio; non solum ne dicamus clamose, quod insanum est; aut intra loquendi modum, quod motu caret; aut summisso murmure, quo etiam debilitatur omnis intentio; sed ut in iisdem partibus, iisdemque affectibus, sint tamen quædam non ita magnæ vocis *declinationes*, prout aut verborum dignitas, aut sententiarum natura, aut depositio, aut inceptio, aut transi-

music; whose beauty consists in the variety of proper tones and inflections of the voice, which ought to rise or fall with a just and easy cadence, according to the nature of the things we express. It gives a light as well as a grace to language; and is the very life and spirit of discourse.

B. According to your notions of elocution, it is an art unknown to our greatest orators. The preacher that you and I heard, about a fortnight ago, did not observe your rule: nor even seem to endeavour it. Except the first thirty words of his sermon, he spake always in the same tone: and the only sign I could perceive of his being more vehement in some parts of his discourse, than in others, was, that when he seemed earnest, he spoke faster than at other times.

A. To me, Sir, his voice seemed to have two tones; though they were well adapted to his words. You have observed justly enough that he did not follow the rules of pronunciation; and I believe he did not perceive the need of them. His voice is naturally melodious: and though it be ill managed, it is however pleasing enough. But you see plainly that it does not make those strong, affecting impressions on the mind that it would produce, if it had such various inflections as are proper to express the speaker's sentiments. Such preachers are like fine clocks, that give a clear, full, soft, agreeable sound; but after all they are clocks only, of no significancy: and having no variety of notes, they are incapable of harmony or eloquence.

B. But were there not many graces in the rapidity of his discourse?

tus postulabit; ut qui singulis pinxerunt coloribus, alia tamen eminentiora, alia reductiora fecerunt; sine quo ne membris quidem suas lineas dedissent.

Quint. lib. xi. c. 3.

A. Yes; and I grant that in some affecting, lively passages, one ought to speak faster than usual. But it is a great fault to speak with so much precipitation that one cannot stop himself, nor be distinctly understood. The voice and action bear some resemblance to verse. Sometimes we must use such a slow, and grave measure as is fit to describe things of that character: and sometimes a short, impetuous one, to express what is quick and ardent. To use always the same degree of action, and the same tone of voice, is like prescribing one remedy for all distempers. But we ought to excuse the uniformity of that preacher's voice and action. For, besides his possessing many excellent qualities, the fault we complain of, is the natural effect of his style. We have already agreed that the modulation of the voice should be exactly suited to the words. Now his style is even, and uniform, without the least variety. On the one hand, it is not familiar, insinuating, and popular; and on the other, it has nothing in it that is lively, figurative, and sublime: but it consists of a constant flow of words, that press one after the other; containing a close and well-connected chain of reasoning, on clear ideas. In a word, he is a man that talks good sense very correctly. Nay, we must acknowledge that he has done great service to the pulpit: he has rescued it from the servitude of vain declaimers; and filled it himself with much strength and dignity. He is very capable of convincing people: but I know few preachers who persuade and move them less than he doth. If you observe carefully, you will even find that his way of preaching is not very instructive, for, besides his not having a familiar, engaging, pathetic manner of talking (as I observed before,) his discourse

does not in the least strike the imagination,* but is addressed to the understanding only. It is a thread of reasoning that cannot be comprehended without the closest attention. And seeing there are but few hearers capable of such a constant application of mind, they retain little or nothing of his discourse. It is like a torrent that hurries along at once, and leaves its channel dry. In order to make a lasting impression on people's minds, we must support their attention, by moving their passions: for, dry instructions can have but little influence. But the thing that I reckon least natural in this preacher, is the continual motion he gives his arms; while there is nothing figurative, nor moving in his words. The action used in ordinary conversation, would suit his style best: or his impetuous gesture would require a style full of sallies and vehemence; and even then he behoved to manage his warmth better, and render it less uniform. In fine, I think he is a great man; but not an orator. A country preacher, who can alarm his hearers, and draw tears from them, answers the end of eloquence better than he.

B. But how shall we know the particular gestures, and the inflections of voice that are agreeable to nature.

* The senses and the imagination are fruitful and inexhaustible sources of mistakes and delusion; but the understanding or mind acting by itself, is not so subject to error; we cannot always speak so as to affect the senses and imagination of others; nor ought we always to endeavour it. When a subject is *abstracted*, we can seldom render it *sensible* (or apt to strike the imagination,) without making it obscure; it is enough if it be made *intelligible*. Nothing can be more unjust than the usual complaints of those, who would know every thing; and yet will not apply themselves to any thing. They take it amiss when we require their attention; and expect that we should always *strike* their fancy, and continually please their senses, and their passions. But it is not in our power to gratify them. The authors of romances and comedies are obliged thus to please and amuse them; but as for us, it is enough if we can instruct those who are truly attentive. *P. Malbranche's recherche de la verite, liv.* iii. c. i.

A. I told you before that the whole art of good orators consists in observing what nature does when unconstrained. You ought not to imitate those haranguers who choose always to declaim; but will never talk to their hearers. On the contrary, you should address yourself to an audience in such a modest, respectful, engaging manner, that each of them shall think you are speaking to him in particular. And this is the use and advantage of natural, familiar, insinuating tones of voice. They ought always to be grave and becoming: and even strong and pathetic, when the subject requires it. But you must not fancy, that you can express the passions by the mere strength of voice; like those noisy speakers, who by bawling and tossing themselves about, stun their hearers, instead of affecting them. If we would succeed in painting, and raising the passions, we must know exactly what movements they inspire. For instance, observe what is the posture, and what the voice of one, whose heart is pierced with sorrow, or surprised at the sight of an astonishing object; remark the natural action of the eyes; what the hands do; and what the whole body. On such occasions nature appears; and you need only follow it; if you must employ art,* conceal it so well under an exact imitation, that it may pass for nature itself. But to speak the truth, orators in such cases are like poets, who write elegies or other passionate verses; they must feel the passion they describe,†

* Τοτε γαρ ἡ τεχνη τελειος, ὅνικ' αν φυσις ειναι δοκῃ. ἡ δ' αυ φυσις επιτυχης, ὁταν λανθανουσα περιεχῃ την τεχνην. LONGINUS, § xxii.

† Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adsunt
Humani vultus. Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi———
———male si mandata loqueris,

else they can never paint it well. The greatest art imaginable can never speak like true passion,* and undisguised nature. So that you will always be but an imperfect orator, if you be not thoroughly moved with those sentiments that you paint, and would infuse into others. Nor do I say this from a pious motive; I speak now only as an orator.†

B. The case, I think, is abundantly plain; but you spoke to us of the eyes; have they their rhetoric too?

A. Yes; if you will believe Tully,‡ and other ancient orators. Nothing is more intelligible than the aspect; it expresses every passion of the soul. And in

> Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo. Tristia mœstum
> Vultum verba decent; iratum plena minarum.
> Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem
> Fortunarum habitum; juvat, aut impellit ad iram,
> Aut ad humum mœrore gravi deducit, et angit;
> Post effert animi motus interprete lingua.
>
> *Hor. de Ar. Po.*

* Θαρρῶν γαρ αφορισαιμην αν ὡς ουδεν ὁυτως ὡς το γενναιον παθος ενθα χρη μεγαληγορον, ὡσπερ ὑπο μανιας τινος, και πνευματος ενθουσιαστικου εκπνεον, και οἱονει φοιβαζον τους λογους. LONGINUS, § viii.

† Neque fieri potest, ut doleat is qui audit, ut oderit, ut invideat, ut pertimescat aliquid, nisi omnes ii motus quos orator adhibere volet judici, in ipso oratore impressi, atque inusti videbuntur—ut enim nulla materies tam facilis ad exardescendum est, quæ nisi admoto igni ignem concipere possit; sic nulla mens est tam ad comprehendendam vim oratoris parata, quæ possit incendi, nisi inflammatus ipse ad eam et ardens accesseris. *Cic. de Orat. lib.* ii. § 45.

‡ Sed in ore sunt omnia. In eo autem ipso dominatus est omnis *oculorum*—animi enim est omnis actio; et imago animi vultus est, indices oculi. Nam hæc est una pars corporis quæ quot animi motus sunt, tot significationes, et commutationes possit efficere—oculi sunt quorum tum intentione, tum remissione, tum conjectu, tum hilaritate motus animorum significemus apte cum genere ipso orationis; est enim *actio* quasi *sermo corporis;* quo magis menti congruens esse debet.—Quare in hac nostra actione secundum vocem vultus valet; is autem oculis gubernatur. *Cic. de Orat. lib.* iii. § 59.

the aspect, the eyes are most active and significant. One well-timed look will pierce to the bottom of the heart.*

B. The preacher, we were speaking of, has usually his eyes shut. When we observe him near, it is very shocking.†

A. It is disagreeable because we perceive that he wants one of the chief things that ought to enliven his discourse.

B. But why does he so?

A. He makes haste to pronounce his words; and shuts his eyes, because it helps his labouring memory.

B. I observed indeed that it was very much burden-

* Smiles and sadness display themselves partly at the mouth; the former by raising, the latter by depressing, the corners of it; and yet we might in many cases mistake a laughing for a weeping countenance, if we did not see the eye. Indeed this little organ, whether sparkling with joy, or melting in sorrow; whether gleaming with indignation, or languishing in tenderness; whether glowing with the steady light of deliberate valour, or sending forth emanations of good will and gratitude, is one of the most interesting objects in the whole visible universe. There is more in it than shape, motion, and colour; there is thought and passion; there is life and soul; there is reason and speech. *Beattie.*

† But the face is the epitome of the whole man, and the eyes are as it were the epitome of the face. No part of the body, besides the face, is capable of as many changes as there are different emotions in the mind, and of expressing them all by those changes. As the countenance admits of so great variety, it requires also great judgment to govern it. Not that the form of the face is to be shifted on every occasion, lest it turn to farce and buffoonery; but it is certain that the eyes have a wonderful power of marking the emotions of the mind; sometimes by a steadfast look, sometimes by a careless one—now by a sudden regard, then by a joyful sparkling, as the sense of the word is diversified; for action is, as it were, the speech of the features and limbs, and must therefore conform itself always to the sentiments of the soul. And it may be observed, that in all which relates to the gesture, there is a wonderful force implanted by nature; since the vulgar, the unskilful, and even the most barbarous, are chiefly affected by this. None are moved by the sound of words but those who understand the language; and the sense of many things is lost upon men of a dull apprehension; but action is a kind of universal tongue; all men are subject to the same passions, and consequently know the same marks of them in others, by which they themselves express them. *Spectator.*

ed; sometimes he repeated several words to find out the thread of his discourse. Such repetitions make one look like a careless school-boy that has forgot his lesson. They are very disagreeable; and would not be easily excused in a preacher of less note.

A. It is not so much the preacher's fault as the defect of the method he follows, after many others. So long as men preach by heart, and often, they will be apt to fall into this perplexity.

B. How do you mean? Would you have us not preach by heart? Without doing so, one could not make an exact, pithy discourse.

A. I am not against a preacher's getting some particular sermons by heart. They may always have time enough to prepare themselves for extraordinary occasions. And they might even acquit themselves handsomely without such great preparation.

B. How? This seems incredible.

A. If I be mistaken, I shall readily own it. Let us only examine the point without prepossession. What is the chief aim of an orator? Is it not to persuade? And in order to this, ought he not to affect his hearers, by moving their passions?

B. I grant it.

A. The most lively and moving way of preaching is therefore the best.

B. True; what do you conclude from that?

A. Which of two orators will have the most powerful and affecting manner; he who learns his discourse by heart; or he who speaks without reciting word for word what he had studied?

B. He, I think, who has got his discourse by heart.

A. Have patience; and let us state the question right.

On the one hand, I suppose a man prepares his discourse exactly, and learns it by heart to the least syllable. On the other hand, I suppose another person, who fills his mind with the subject he is to talk of; who speaks with great ease; (for you would not have any body* attempt to speak in public, without having proper talents for it:) in short, a man who has attentively considered all the principles, and parts of the subject he is to handle; and has a comprehensive view of them in all their extent; who has reduced his thoughts into a proper method; and prepared the strongest expressions to explain and enforce them in a sensible manner; who ranges all his arguments, and has a sufficient number of affecting figures; such a man certainly knows every thing that he ought to say; and the order in which the whole should be placed;† to succeed therefore in his delivery, he wants nothing but those common expressions that must make the bulk of his discourse. But do you believe now that such a person would have any difficulty in finding easy, familiar expressions?

* ——Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium——Hor. *de A. P.*

† He, then, that would prepare himself to be a preacher in this method, must accustom himself to talk freely to himself, to let his thoughts flow from him; especially when he feels an edge and heat upon his mind; for then happy expressions will come in his mouth—he must also be writing essays upon all sorts of subjects; for by writing he will bring himself to a correctness both in thinking and in speaking; and thus by a hard practice for two or three years, a man may render himself such a *master* in this way, that he can never be surprised; nor will new thoughts ever dry up upon him. He must talk over himself the whole *body* of divinity; and accustom himself to explain, and prove; to clear objections; and to apply evey part of it to some *practical* use--and if in these his meditations, happy thoughts, and noble, tender expressions, do at any time offer themselves, he must not lose them; but write them down—by a very few years' practice of two or three such soliloquies a day, chiefly in the morning, when the head is clearest, and the spirits are liveliest, a man will contract a great easiness, both in thinking and speaking.

Bp. Burnet's disc. on the pastoral care, p. 210, 211.

B. He could not find such just and handsome ones as he might have hit on, if he had sought them leisurely in his closet.

A. I own that. But according to you, he would lose only a few ornaments; and you know how to rate that loss, according to the principles we laid down before. On the other side, what advantage must he not have in the freedom and force of his action; which is the main thing. Supposing that he has applied himself much to composing, (as Cicero requires of an orator,*) that he has read all the best models; and has a natural or acquired easiness of style and speech; that he has abundance of solid knowledge and learning; that he understands his subject perfectly well; and has ranged all the parts and proofs of it in his head: in such a case we must conclude that he will speak with force, and order, and readiness.† His periods perhaps will not sooth the ear so much as the others; and for that reason he must be the better orator. His transitions may not be so fine; it is no great matter; though these he might have prepared without getting them by heart; besides, these little omissions were common to the most eloquent orators among the ancients. They thought such negligence was very natural; and ought even to be imitated, to avoid the appearance of too great preparation. What then could our orator want? He might make

* Caput autem est, quod (ut vere dicam) minime facimus, (est enim magni laboris, quem plerique fugimus) quam plurimum scribere—stilus optimus, et præstantissimus dicendi effector, ac magister; neque injuria; nam si subitam et fortuitam orationem, commentatio, et cogitatio facile vincit; hanc ipsam profecto assidua ac diligens scriptura superabit. *De Orat. lib.* i. § 33.

† ——cui lecta potenter erit res,
Nec facundia deserit hunc, nec lucidus ordo.
Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.
Hor. de Art. Poet.

some little repetition; but that too must have its use. Not only will the judicious hearer take a pleasure in observing nature here, which leads one often to resume whatever view of the subject strikes strongest upon the mind; but likewise this repetition imprints the truth more deeply; which is the best manner of instruction. At the worst, one might find in his discourse some inaccuracy of construction, some obsolete word that has been censured by the academy: something that is irregular; or, if you will, some weak or misapplied expression, that he may happen to drop in the warmth of action. But surely they must have narrow souls, who can think such little escapes worth any one's notice. There is abundance of these to be met with in the most excellent originals.* The greatest orators among the ancients neglected them: and if our views were as noble as theirs, we should not so much regard those trifles,† which can amuse none but such as are not able to discern and pursue what is truly great. Excuse my freedom, Sir; if I did not think you had a genius very different from these little, cavilling

* Παρατεθεμενος δ' ουκ ολιγα και αυτος ἁμαρτηματα, και Ομηρου, και των αλλων ὁσοι μεγιστοι, και ἡκιστα τοις πταισμασιν αρεχομενος, ὁμως δε ουχ αμαρτηματα μαλλον αυτα ἑκουσια καλων, η παροραματα δι αμελειαν, εικη που και ὡς ετυχεν ὑπομεγαλοφυιας ανεπιστατως παρεννηνεγμενα.

LONGINUS, § 33.

† Sunt delicta tamen, quibus ignovisse velimus;
Nam neque chorda sonum reddit quem vult manus et mens;
Poscentique gravem persæpe remittit acutum;
Nec semper feriet quodcunque minabitur arcus.
Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura———

Hor. de Art. Poet.

critics I condemn, I should speak of them with greater caution.

B. You may always speak your mind, Sir, without any reserve on my account. Be pleased therefore to go on with your comparison.

A. Consider then, in the next place, the advantages that a preacher must have who does not get his sermon by heart. He is entirely master of himself; he speaks in an easy, unaffected way; and not like a formal declaimer. Things flow then from their proper source. If he has a natural talent for eloquence, his language must be lively and moving; even the warmth that animates him,* must lead him to such pertinent expressions and figures, as he could not have found out by study.

B. Why? Surely a man may enliven his fancy, and compose very sprightly discourses in his closet.

A. I own that; but a just elocution and gesture must still give them a greater life and spirit. Besides, what one says in the ardour of action is far more natural and affecting; it has a negligent air; and discovers none of that art, which is visible in all elaborate composures.

* But the rule I have observed last, is the most necessary of all; and without it all the rest will never do the business; it is this; that a man must have in himself a deep sense of the truth and power of religion; he must have a life and flame in his thoughts with relation to these subjects; he must have felt himself those things which he intends to explain and recommend to others. He must observe narrowly the motions of his own mind;—that so he may have a lively heat in himself when he speaks of them; and that he may speak in so sensible a manner, that it may be almost *felt* that he speaks from his heart. There is an authority in the simplest things that can be said, when they carry visible characters of genuineness in them. Now if a man can carry on this method, and by much meditation and prayer, draw down divine influences, which are always to be expected when a man puts himself in the way of them, and prepares himself for them; he will always feel that *while he is musing a fire is kindled* within him; and then he will speak with authority, and without constraint; his thoughts will be true, and his expressions free and easy.

Discourse of the pastoral care, p. 111, 112.

We may add farther, that a skilful, experienced orator, adapts things to the capacity of his hearers;* and varies his discourse, according to the impression he sees it makes upon their minds. For, he easily perceives whether they understand him, or not; and whether he gains their attention, and moves their hearts; and if it be needful, he resumes the same things in a different manner, and sets them in another light; he clothes them in more familiar images, and comparisons; or he goes back to the plainest principles, from which he gradually deduces the truths he would enforce; or he endeavours to cure those passions, that hinder the truth from making a due impression. This is the true art of instruction and persuasion; and without this address and presence of mind, we can only make roving and fruitless declamations. Observe now how far the orator, who gets every thing by heart, falls short of the other's success. If we suppose then a man to preach, who depends entirely on his memory, and dares not pronounce a word different from his lesson; his style will be very exact; but, as Dionysius Halicarnassius observes of Isocrates, his composition must please more when it is read, than when it is pronounced. Besides, let him take what pains he will, the inflexions of his voice will be too uniform; and always a little constrained. He is not like a man that speaks to an audience; but like a rhetorician, who recites or declaims. His action must be awkward and forced; by fixing his eyes too much, he shows how much his memory labours in his delivery; and he is afraid to give way to

* Erit igitur hæc facultas in eo quem volumus esse eloquentem, ut definire rem possit; neque id faciat tam presse et anguste, quam in illis eruditissimis disputationibus fieri solet, sed cum explanatius; tum etiam uberius, et ad commune udicium, *popularemque intelligentiam* accommodatius.

Cic. Orat. § 33.

an unusual emotion, lest he should lose the thread of his discourse. Now the hearer perceiving such an undisguised art, is so far from being touched and captivated, as he ought to be, that he observes the speaker's artifice with coldness and neglect.

B. But did not the ancient orators do what you condemn?

A. I believe not.

B. What! do you think that Demosthenes and Tully did not learn by heart those finished orations they have left us?

A. We know very well that they composed and wrote their harangues, before they spake in public; but we have several reasons to believe that they did not get them by heart, word for word. Even the orations of Demosthenes, as we have them, shew rather the sublimity and vehemence of a great genius, that was accustomed to speak powerfully of public affairs; than the accuracy and politeness of an author. As for Cicero, in several places of his harangues, we find things spoken on sudden emergencies, that he could not possibly have foreseen. And if we take his opinion of this matter;* he thinks an orator ought to have a great memory; and he even speaks of an artificial kind of memory as an useful invention; but all he says on this point does not imply that we ought to learn every word by heart. On the contrary, he seems only to require, that we should range all the parts of a discourse exactly in our memory, and

* Sed verborum memoria, quae *minus* est nobis *necessaria*, majore imaginum varietate distinguitur; multa enim sunt verba. Quæ quasi articuli connectunt *membra* orationis, quæ formari similitudine nulla possunt; *eorum* fingendæ nobis sunt *imagines*, quibus semper utamur. Rerum memoria, *propria* est oratoris; eam singulis personis bene positis notare possumus, ut *sententias* imaginibus, *ordinem* locis comprehendamus. *De Orat. lib.* ii. § 88.

prepare the figures and chief expressions we are to use; so as to be ready to add, off-hand, whatever may occasionally be suggested from a view of the audience, or unexpected accidents. And it is for this reason, that he requires so much application and presence of mind in an orator.

B. You must allow me to tell you, Sir, that all this does not convince me; for I cannot believe that one can speak so very well, without having prepared and adjusted all his expressions.

C. The reason why it is so hard to persuade you in this case, is, because you judge of the matter by common experience. If they, who get their sermons by heart, were to preach without that preparation, it is likely they would succeed but very ill; nor am I surprised at it; for, they are not accustomed to follow nature: they have studied only to compose their sermons: and that too with affectation. They have never once thought of speaking in a noble, strong, and natural manner.* Indeed

* This leads me to consider the difference that is between the reading, and the speaking of sermons. Reading is peculiar to this nation; and is endured in no other. It has indeed made our sermons more exact; and so has produced to us many volumes of the best that are extant. But after all, though some few read so happily, pronounce so truly, and enter so entirely into those affections which they recommend; that in them, we see both the correctness of reading, and the seriousness of speaking sermons; yet every one is not so happy. Some by hanging their head perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read; and by a cursory running over them, do so lessen the matter of their sermons, that as they are generally read with very little life or affection, so they are heard with as little regard, or esteem. Those who read, ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than (for the most part) they are to read true; to pronounce with an emphasis; to raise their head, and to direct their eyes to their hearers; and if they practised more, alone, the just way of reading, they might deliver their sermons with much more advantage. Man is a low sort of creature; he does not (nay, the greater part cannot) consider things in themselves, without those little seasonings that must recommend them to their affections.—Besides, the people (who are too apt to censure the clergy) are easily carried into an obvious reflection on reading, that it is an effect of laziness. *Discourse of the pastoral care, ch.* ix.

the greatest part of preachers have not a sufficient fund of solid knowledge to depend on, and are therefore afraid to trust themselves, without the usual preparation. The method of getting sermons by heart, qualifies many, who have but very scanty and superficial parts, to make a tolerable figure in the pulpit; seeing they need only lay together a certain number of passages and remarks: and however little genius or assistance a man has, he may, with time and application, be able to work up and polish his matter into some form. But to preach with judgment and strength, requires an attentive meditation upon the first principles of religion; an exact knowledge of morality; an insight into antiquity; strength of reasoning; and suitable action. Is not this, Sir, what you require in an orator, who does not learn his discourse by heart?*

* It may be proper to present the reader, in one view, the opinion of several other distinguished authors, on the use of written discourses in the pulpit. "I knew a clergyman of some distinction, who appeared to deliver his sermon without looking into his notes, which, when I complemented him upon, he assured me he could not repeat six lines; but his method was to write the whole sermon in a large, plain hand, with all the forms of margin, paragraph, marked page, and the like; then on Sunday morning he took care to run it over five or six times, which he could do in an hour; and when he delivered it, by pretending to turn his face from one side to the other, he would (in his own expression) pick up the lines, and cheat his people by making them believe he had it all by heart. He farther added, that whenever he happened by neglect to omit any of these circumstances, the vogue of the parish was, 'our doctor gave us but an indifferent sermon to-day.' Now among us, many clergymen act so directly contrary to this method, that from a habit of saving time and paper, which they acquired at the university, they write in so diminutive a manner, with such frequent blots and interlineations, that they are hardly able to go on without perpetual hesitations, or extemporary expletives; and I desire to know what can be more inexcusable, than to see a divine and a scholar at a loss in reading his own compositions, which it is supposed he has been preparing with much pains and thought for the instruction of his people. The want of a little more care in this article is the cause of much ungraceful behaviour. You will observe some clergymen with their heads held down from the beginning to the end, within an inch of the cushion, to read what is hardly legible; which, beside the untoward manner,

A. You have explained my thoughts exactly. Only it may not be improper to add, that though a man should

hinders them from making the best advantage of their voice; others again have a trick of popping up and down every moment from their paper to the audience, like an idle school boy on a repetition day.

Let me entreat you therefore to add one half crown a year to the article of paper; to transcribe your sermons in as large and plain a manner as you can; and either make no interlineations, or change the whole leaf; for we, your hearers, would rather you should be less correct, than perpetually stammering, which I take to be one of the worst solecisms in rhetoric. And lastly, read your sermon once or twice a day for a few days before you preach it; to which you will probably answer some years hence, 'that it was but just finished when the last bell rang to church;' and I shall readily believe, but not excuse you."

Swift's Letter to a Young Clergyman.

"That a discourse well spoken hath a stronger effect than one well read, will hardly bear a question. From this manifest truth I very early concluded, and was long of the opinion, that the way of reading sermons should be absolutely banished from the pulpit. But from farther experience, I am now disposed to suspect, that this conclusion was rather hasty. As to my personal experience I shall frankly tell you, what I know to be fact. I have tried both ways; I continued long in the practice of repeating, and was even thought (if people did not very much deceive me) to succeed in it; but I am absolutely certain, that I can give more energy, and preserve the attention of the hearers better, to what I read than ever it was in my power to do to what I repeated. Nor is it any wonder. There are difficulties to be surmounted in the latter case, which have no place at all in the former. The talents in other respects are the same, that fit one to excel in either way. Now as it will, I believe, be admitted by every body who reflects, that a discourse well read is much better than one ill spoken, I should not think it prudent to establish any general rule, which would probably make bad speakers of many, who might otherwise have proved good readers. There is something in charging one's memory with a long chain of words and syllables, and this is one of the difficulties I hinted at, and then running on, as it were, mechanically in the same train, the preceding word associating and drawing in the subsequent, that seems by taking off a man's attention from the thought to the expression, to render him insusceptible of the delicate sensibility as to the thought, which is the true spring of rhetorical pronunciation. That this is not invariably the effect of getting by heart, the success of some actors on the stage is an undeniable proof. But the comparative facility, arising from the much greater brevity of their speeches, and from the relief and emotion that is given to the player by the action of the other dialogists in the scene, makes the greatest difference imaginable in the two cases. A man, through habit, becomes so perfectly master of a speech of thirty or forty lines, which will not take him three minutes to repeat, that he hath no anxiety about recollecting the words; his whole attention is to the sentiment. The case must be very different, when

not possess all these qualities in a remarkable degree, he may yet preach very well, if he has a solid judgment,

the memory is charged with a discourse, which will take thirty minutes to deliver."

"Now when once the attention, as was hinted already, loses hold of the thought, and is wholly occupied in tracing the series of the words, the speaker insensibly to relieve himself from the difficulty of keeping up his voice at the same stretch, falls into a kind of tune, which, without any regard to the sense of what is said, returns as regularly, as if it were played on an instrument. One thing further may be urged in favour of reading, and it is of some consequence, that it always requires some preparation. A discourse must be written before it can be read. When a man who does not read, gets over, through custom, all apprehension about the opinion of his hearers, or respect for their judgment, there is some danger, that laziness may prompt him to speak without any preparation, and consequently to become careless what he says. But to return, the sum of what has been offered, is not that reading a discourse is universally preferable to repeating it. By no means. But only that if the latter way admits of higher excellence, the former is more attainable and less hazardous."

Campbell's Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence.

"And here it may not, perhaps, be improper to make a few remarks on the expediency of pronouncing sermons from memory; and I make them the more willingly, because what I have to say on this head may be comfortable to those young men, whose memory, like my own, inclines rather to weakness, than to strength.

"First, then, it can admit of no doubt, that every public speaker and teacher ought to be able to speak from memory, or even without premeditation, as the circumstances may require; and should, therefore, now and then practise extemporary speaking, and study to acquire a readiness of apprehension and a command of words, and take every prudent method he can think of, for improving remembrance.

"Secondly, They whose faculties are uncommonly susceptible; who can retain a sermon after once or twice reading it; or who, like the gentleman abovementioned, can commit one to memory in two or three hours, may, at all times, or as often as they choose, preach without notes; especially, if they have confidence in their recollection, and can divest themselves of anxiety. But many men there are, of good parts, who, from natural bashfulness, or from bodily weakness, or from having been in danger of exposing themselves through a sudden failure of memory, cannot depend on their presence of mind, or quickness of recollection, when they appear in public; though in the ordinary affairs of life they have no reason to complain of this faculty. Such persons ought not to preach without papers. If they do, it will be injurious both to themselves, and to their hearers. To themselves, by tormenting them with solicitude, to the great prejudice of their health. And to their hearers, because the fear of forgetting will take off their attention from the management of their voice; the

a tolerable stock of knowledge, and an easy way of speaking. For, in this method, as in the other, there may be

consequence whereof is, that they will speak without that energy which impresses the meaning on the audience; and may, moreover, contract bad habits of drawling, canting, hesitating, or quick speaking; which are all disagreeable to rational hearers, and make every hearer inattentive; and the most eloquent sermon insipid.

"Thirdly, Those preachers who, after much practice, cannot commit a discourse to memory in less than two days, (and this, I believe, is a common case,) should never in my opinion, attempt it; except, perhaps, on extraordinary occasions, when they may be obliged to speak with ease and elegance, and yet have no opportunity of reading. Two days every week are almost a third part of human life. And when one considers, that the sermons thus committed to memory are forgotten as soon as delivered, which is also a common case, who would not regret such a waste of time? At this rate, of thirty years employed in the ministry, there are almost ten consumed—in what? in drudgery more laborious, and far more unprofitable, than that of a schoolboy; in loading the memory with words, which are not remembered for three days together. Would not the preacher have laid out those years to better purpose, in giving correctness to his public discourses, or in other improving studies; or in visiting and instructing the neighbours; or in agriculture, and the like liberal amusements? Besides, in these circumstances, a clergyman can never preach without long preparation; nor, if at any time his health should fail, without a degree of anxiety that may be detrimental to both his mind and his body.

"Indeed, were sermons, that are pronounced from memory, found to have a more powerful effect upon the hearer, than such as are read, I should not think this time altogether lost. But, if the preacher have learned to read well, which he may and ought to do, and if he write what he has to say with that distinctness which is here recommended, and prepare himself for the public exhibition by several private rehearsals at home, I am inclined to think, that he will pronounce with more composure and self-command, and with an energy more becoming the pulpit, than if he were to speak from recollection. For, in the one case, his mind is at ease, and he has nothing to do, but to pronounce; in the other, he pronounces and recollects at the same time; and is, besides, liable to mistakes and failures of memory, and, if his nerves are not uncommonly strong, to occasional fits of solicitude. Why does a musician choose to play by book even the music that he remembers? It is, because, by taking in, with one glance of his eye, a number of contiguous notes, his mind is always disengaged, and he is every where the better prepared for introducing the expressive touches, and other necessary ornaments. In like manner, a good reader will, if I mistake not, read more emphatically and with greater elegance, what he sees before him, and is well acquainted with, than he can pronounce what is suggested by continual recollection; especially, if the discourse he has to deliver be of considerable length.

"As to the effect upon the hearers; if I am to judge by my own feelings,

different degrees of eloquence. You may further observe, that most of those who preach without getting their sermons by heart, do not prepare themselves enough. They ought to study their subject with the closest attention; prepare all those moving passages that should affect the audience; and give the several parts of their discourse such an order as will best serve to set the whole in the most proper light.

B. You have oftentimes spoken of this order; do you mean any thing else by it than a division of the subject? Perhaps you have some peculiar notion on this point too.

A. You think that you rally me; but in good earnest, I am as singular in my opinion upon this head, as on any other.

B. I easily believe you.

A. It is certainly so: and since we have fallen upon this subject, I will show you how far I think the greater part of orators are defective in the point of order.

B. Since you are so fond of order, I hope you do not dislike divisions.

and trust to the declaration of many persons of candour and sensibility, I must say, that sermons in the mouth of a good reader have a more powerful energy, than those that are spoken without book. The pathos may be less vehement, perhaps, but it is more solemn, and seems better adapted to the place, and to the subject. Preachers, indeed, there are, who lay claim to extraordinary gifts, and pretend to speak from supernatural impulse; and there are hearers, who give them credit for this; and think, that what is written, and read to them, has too much the air of mere human doctrine. But such a conceit is of no account in rational inquiry; for it only proves, that the preacher is vain and the people ignorant.

"In Italy and France, sermons are generally pronounced without notes. But they are at the same time accompanied with much theatrical gesture; and the consequence is, that the people consider them rather as an amusement, than as a part of the church service. In England, the established clergy do for the most part read their sermons. And England has produced a greater number of good preachers, than any other country in Europe." *Beattie on Memory.*

A. I am far from approving them.

B. Why? Do they not methodise a discourse?

A. For the most part, divisions give only a seeming order; while they really mangle and clog a discourse, by separating it into two or three parts; which must interrupt the orator's action, and the effect it ought to produce. There remains no true unity after such divisions;* seeing they make two or three different discourses, which are joined into one, only by an arbitrary connexion. For three sermons preached at different times, (if they be formed upon some regular concerted plan, as the sermons in Advent usually are,) make one piece, or entire discourse, as much, as the three points of any of these sermons make one whole by being joined, and delivered, together.†

* A text being opened, then the point upon which the sermon is to run is to be opened; and it will be the better heard and understood, if there be but one point in a sermon; so that one head, and only one, is well stated, and fully set out. *Discourse of the pastoral care*, p. 249.

† A question has been moved, whether this method of laying down heads, as it is called, be the best method of preaching. A very able judge, the archbishop of Cambray, in his dialogues on eloquence, declares strongly against it. But notwithstanding his authority and arguments, I cannot help being of opinion, that the present method of dividing a sermon into heads, ought not to be laid aside. Established practice has now given it so much weight, that, were there nothing more in its favour, it would be dangerous for any preacher to deviate so far from the common track. But the practice itself has also, in my judgment, much reason on its side. If formal partitions give a sermon less of the oratorical appearance, they render it, however, more clear, more easily apprehended, and of course, more instructive to the bulk of hearers, which is always the main object to be kept in view. The heads of a sermon are great assistances to the memory, and recollection of a hearer. They serve also to fix his attention. They enable him more easily to keep pace with the progress of the discourse; they give him pauses and resting places, where he can reflect on what has been said, and look forward to what is to follow. They are attended with this advantage too, that they give the audience the opportunity of knowing, beforehand, when they are to be released from the fatigue of attention, and thereby make them follow the speaker more patiently. "The conclusion of each head," says Quintilian, "is a relief to the hearers; just as upon a journey, the mile-stones, which are set up on the road, serve to diminish the traveller's fatigue. For we are al-

B. What is it then that you mean by order? How confused must a discourse be that is not divided?

A. Do you think there is more confusion in the orations of Demosthenes and Tully, than in the sermons of your parish preacher?

B. I do not know. I believe not.

A. You need not be afraid of giving your judgment too freely. The harangues of these great men are not divided as our sermons are. Nay, Isocrates (of whom we spake so much before,) and other ancient orators, did not follow our method of dividing. The fathers of the church knew nothing of it. Even St. Bernard, the last of them, only gives a hint of some divisions, and does not pursue them; nor divide his discourses in form. And for a long time after him, sermons were not divided: it is a modern invention which we owe originally to the scholastic divines.

B. I grant that the schoolmen are a very bad model for eloquence; but what form did the ancients use to give their discourses?

A. They did not divide them; but they pointed out carefully all those things that ought to be distinguished; to each of them they assigned its proper place;* after

ways pleased with seeing our labour begin to lessen; and, by calculating how much remains, are stirred up to finish our task more cheerfully." With regard to breaking the unity of a discourse, I cannot be of opinion that there arises, from that quarter, any argument against the method I am defending. If the unity be broken, it is to the nature of the heads, or topics of which the speaker treats, that this is to be imputed; not to his laying them down in form. On the contrary, if his heads be well chosen, his marking them out, and distinguishing them, in place of impairing the unity of the whole, renders it more conspicuous and complete; by showing how all the parts of a discourse hang upon one another, and tend to one point. *Blair.*

* Ordinis hæc virtus erit, et venus, aut ego fallor,
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
Pleraque differat, et præsens in tempus omittat———
Infelix operis summa, quia ponera totum
Nesciet——— *Hor. de A. P.*

having attentively considered where it might be introduced to the best advantage, and be fittest to make a due impression. Ofttimes that, which would seem nothing to the purpose, by being unseasonably urged, has a very great weight when it is reserved for its proper place: till the audience be prepared by other things to feel all its force and consequence. Nay, a single word, when happily applied, will set the truth in the strongest light. Cicero tells us, that we ought sometimes to delay giving a full view of the truth, till the very conclusion. But then throughout our discourse, there ought to run such a concatenation of proofs, as that the first may make way for the second; and the next always serve to support the former. We ought at first to give a general view of our subject, and endeavour to gain the favour of the audience by a modest introduction,* a respectful address, and the genuine marks of candour and probity. Then we should establish those principles on which we design to argue; and in a clear, easy, sensible manner, propose the principal facts we are to build on; insisting chiefly on those circumstances, of which we intend to make use afterwards. From these principles and facts we must draw just consequences; and argue in such a clear and well-connected manner, that all our proofs may support each other; and so be the more remembered. Every step we advance, our discourse ought to grow stronger; so that the hearers may gradually perceive the force and evidence of the truth; and then we ought to display it in such lively images

* Sed hæc adjuvant in oratore, lenitas vocis, vultus, pudoris significatio, verborum comitas; si quid persequare acrius, ut invitus, et coactus facere videare. Facilitatis, liberalitatis, mansuetudinis, pietatis, grati animi, non appetentis, non avidi signa proferri perutile est—tantum autem efficitur sensu quodam ac ratione dicendi, ut quasi mores oratoris effingat oratio. *Cicero De Orat.*

and movements as are proper to excite the passions. In order to this we must know their various springs, and the mutual dependence they have one upon another; which of them we can most easily move, and employ to raise the rest; and which of them in fine, is able to produce the greatest effects; and must therefore be applied to, in the conclusion of our discourse. It is oft-times proper, at the close, to make a short recapitulation, in which the orator ought to exert all his force and skill in giving the audience a full, clear, concise view of the chief topics he has enlarged on. In short, one is not obliged always to follow this method without any variation. There are exceptions and allowances to be made, for different subjects and occasions. And even in this order I have proposed, one may find an endless variety. But now you may easily see, that this method, (which is chiefly taken from Tully,) cannot be observed in a discourse that is divided into three parts, nor can it be followed in each particular division. We ought therefore to choose some method, Sir, but such a method as is not discovered, and promised in the beginning of our discourse. Cicero tells us, that the best method is generally to conceal the order we follow, till we lead the hearer to it without his being aware of it before. I remember he says in express terms, that we ought to conceal even the number of our arguments; so that one shall not be able to count them, though they be very distinct in themselves; and that we ought not plainly to point out the division of a discourse. But such is the undistinguishing taste of these latter ages, that an audience cannot perceive any order, unless the speaker distinctly explain it in the beginning; and even intimate to them his gradual advances from the first to the sec-

ond, and following general heads or subdivisions of his discourse.

C. But do not divisions help to support the attention, and ease the memory of the hearers? It is for their better instruction that the speaker divides his discourse.

A. A division chiefly relieves the speaker's memory. And even this effect might be much better obtained by his following a natural order without any express division; for the true connexion of things best directs the mind. Our common divisions are of use to those only, who have studied, and been trained up to this method in the schools. And if the common people retain the division better than the rest of the sermon; it is only because they hear it often repeated: but, generally speaking, they best remember practical points, and such things as strike their senses and imagination.

B. The order you propose may be proper enough for some subjects: but it cannot be fit for all; for, we have not always facts to lay down.

A. When we have none, we must do without them: but there are very few subjects into which they might not be aptly introduced. One of Plato's chief beauties is, that in the beginning of his moral pieces he usually gives us some fragment of history, or some tradition that serves as the foundation of his discourse. This method would far more become those, who preach religion; which is entirely founded upon tradition, history, and the most ancient records. Indeed, most preachers argue but weakly; and do not instruct people sufficiently, because they do not trace back things to these sources.

B. We have already given you too much trouble, Sir, and I am almost ashamed to detain you longer; but

I wish heartily you would allow me to ask you a few more questions concerning the rules of public discourse.

A. With all my heart; I am not yet weary; you may dispose, as you please, of the little time I have left.

B. Well then, you would have all false and trifling ornaments entirely banished from discourse. Now, though you touched upon this point before, pray show me by some sensible examples, how to distinguish such false beauties from those that are solid and natural.*

A. Do you love quavering notes in music? Are you not better pleased with those brisk, significant notes that describe things, and express the passions?

B. Yes, certainly; for, quavers are of no use; they only amuse the ear, and do not affect the mind. Our music was once full of them, and was therefore very weak and confused: but now we begin to refine our taste, and to come nearer the music of the ancients; which is a kind of passionate declamation that acts powerfully upon the soul.

A. I knew that music, of which you are so good a judge, would serve to make you understand what concerns eloquence. There ought to be a kind of eloquence in music itself; and in both these arts, we ought to reject all false and trilling beauties. Do you not perceive now that by a trilling discourse I mean the humming jin-

* False eloquence, like the prismatic glass,
Its gaudy colours spreads on every place;
The face of nature we no more survey,
All glares alike without distinction gay.
But true expression, like the unchanging sun,
Clears and improves whate'er it shines upon,
It gilds all objects but it alters none.
Expression is the dress of thought, and still
Appears more decent, as more suitable.

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

gle of languid, uniform periods; a chiming of words that returns perpetually, like the burden of a song? This is the false eloquence that resembles bad music.

B. I wish, Sir, you could make it a little plainer still.

A. The reading of good and bad orators will more effectually form your taste, on this point, than all the rules in the world. However, it were easy to satisfy you by some pertinent examples. I will not mention any modern ones; though we abound in false ornaments. That I may not offend any person, let us return to Isocrates, who is the standard of those nice and florid harangues that are now in vogue. Did you ever read his famous panegyric on Helen?

B. Yes; I have read it some time ago.

A. How did you like it?

B. Extremely well. I thought I never saw so much wit, elegance, sweetness, invention and delicacy in any composure. I own to you that Homer himself (whom I read afterwards,) did not seem to have so much spirit as he. But now that you have shown me what ought to be the true aim of poets and orators, I see plainly that Homer, who concealed his art, vastly surpasses Isocrates, who took so much pains to display his skill. But I was once charmed with that orator, and should have been so still, if you had not undeceived me. Mr. —— is the Isocrates of our days: and I perceive that by showing the defects of that ancient orator, you condemn all those, who imitate his florid, effeminate rhetoric.

A. I am now speaking of Isocrates only; in the beginning of his encomium he magnifies the love that Theseus had for Helen, and fancied that he should give a lofty idea of her, by describing the heroic qualities of that great man who fell in love with her: as if Theseus

(whom the ancients always represent as weak and inconstant in his amours,) could not have been smitten with a woman of a moderate beauty. Then he comes to the judgment that Paris formed of her. He says that a dispute having arisen among the goddesses concerning their beauty; they agreed to make Paris judge of it: upon which occasion Juno proffered him the empire of Asia: Minerva assured him of constant victory in battles: and Venus tempted him with the beautiful Helen. Now seeing Paris, when he was to determine this matter, could not behold the faces of those goddesses, because of their dazzling splendor, he could only judge of the worth of the three things that they offered; and upon the comparison he preferred Helen to empire, and to victory. Then the orator praises the judgment of Paris, in whose determination the goddesses themselves acquiesced; and adds these remarkable words:* "I wonder that any one should think Paris indiscreet in choosing to live with her, for whom many demi-gods would have been willing to die."

C. This puts me in mind of our preachers, who are so full of antitheses and turns of wit. There are a great many such orators as Isocrates.

A. He is their master! all the rest of his panegyric is of the same strain.† It is founded on the long war of

* *Θαυμαζω δ' ει τις οιεται κακως βεβουλευσθαι τον μετα ταυτης ζην ελομενον, ης ενεκα πολλοι των ημιθεων αποθνησκειν εθελησαν.* Isocr. Hel. Laud.

† His very next words are these,——*Πως δ' ουκ αν ειη ανοητος ει τας θεας ειδως περι καλλους φιλονεικουσας, αυτος καλλους κατεφρονησε, και μη ταυτην ενομισε μεγιστην ειναι των δωρων, περι ης κακεινας ερωα μαλιστα σπουδαζουσας;* *Ibid.*

Troy; the calamities that the Greeks suffered for the rape of Helen, and the praise of beauty, which has so much power over men. There is nothing in the whole discourse solidly proved; nor the least point of moral instruction. He judges of the worth of things only according to men's extravagant passions. And as his proofs are weak, so his style is flourished and finical. I quoted this passage, profane as it is, because it is a very famous one; and because this affected manner is very much in fashion. The more grave discourses of Isocrates are composed in the same spruce, effeminate way; and are full of such false beauties as that I have now mentioned.

C. I find you like none of those witty turns, which have nothing in them that is either solid, natural, or affecting: and tend neither to convince, nor paint, nor persuade. The example you have brought from Isocrates, though it be upon a trifling subject, is yet very pertinent; for, all such tinsel wit must appear still more ridiculous when it is applied to grave and serious matters.*

* A loose and indiscriminate manner of applying the promises and threatenings of the gospel, is ill-judged and pernicious; it is not possible to conceive a more effectual method of depriving the sword of the Spirit of its edge, than adopting that lax generality of representation, which leaves its hearer nothing to apply, presents no incentive to self-examination, and besides its utter inefficiency, disgusts by the ignorance of human nature, or the disregard to its best interests, it infallibly betrays. Without descending to such a minute specification of circumstances, as shall make our addresses personal, they ought unquestionably to be characteristic, that the conscience of the audience may feel the hand of the preacher searching it, and every individual know where to class himself. The preacher who aims at doing good will endeavour, above all things, to insulate his hearers, to place each of them apart, and render it impossible for him to escape by losing himself in the crowd. At the day of judgment, the attention excited by the surrounding scene, the strange aspect of nature, the dissolution of the elements, and the last trump, will have no other effect than to cause the reflections of the sinner to return with a more overwhelming tide on his own character, his sentence, his unchanging destiny; and, amid the innumerable millions, who surround him, he will *mourn apart.* It is thus the christian

A. But Sir, as to Isocrates, do not you think I had reason to censure him as freely as Tully assures us Aristotle did?

B. What says Tully?

A. That Aristotle,† perceiving Isocrates had perverted eloquence from its proper use, to amusement and ostentation; and thereby drawn to himself the most considerable disciples, he applied to him a verse of Philoctetes, to show how much he was ashamed of being silent, while that vain declaimer carried all before him. But I have done now; it is time for me to be going.

B. We cannot part with you so soon, Sir; will you then allow of no antitheses?

A. Yes; when the things we speak of are naturally opposite one to another, it may be proper enough to show their opposition. Such antitheses are just, and have a solid beauty, and a right application of them is often the most easy and concise manner of explaining things. But it is extremely childish to use artificial turns and windings to make words clash and play one against another. At first, this may happen to dazzle those, who have no taste; but they soon grow weary of such a silly affectation. Did you ever observe the Gothic architecture of our old churches?

B. Yes; it is very common.

A. Did you take notice of the roses, holes, unconnected ornaments, and disjointed little knacks that these Gothic buildings are full of. These odd conceits are just such beauties in architecture as forced antitheses

minister should endeavour to prepare the tribunal of conscience, and turn the eyes of every one of his hearers on himself.

Hall on the discouragements and supports of the christian ministry.

† Lib. iii. § 35.

and quibbles are in eloquence. The Grecian architecture is far more simple, and admits of none but natural, solid, and majestic ornaments; we see nothing in it but what is great, proportioned, and well placed. But the Gothic kind was invented by the Arabians; who being a people of a quick, sprightly fancy, and having no rule nor culture, could scarce avoid falling into these whimsical niceties. And this vivacity corrupted their taste in all other things. For, they used sophisms in their logic; they loved little knacks in architecture; and invented witticisms in poetry and eloquence. All these are of the same kind.

B. This is curious, indeed. You think then that a sermon, full of forced antitheses, and such kind of ornaments, is like a church built in the Gothic way.

A. Yes; I think the comparison is just.

B. Let me ask you but one question more, and then you shall go.

A. What is it?

B. It seems very difficult to give a particular account of facts, in a noble style; and yet we ought to do so, if we talk solidly as you require. Pray, what is the proper style for expatiating, in such cases?

A. We are so much afraid of a low strain, that our expressions are usually dry, lifeless, and indeterminate. They, who praise a saint, pitch on the most magnificent phrases. They tell us he was an admirable person; that his virtues were celestial; that he was rather an angel, than a man. And thus the whole encomium is a mere declamation, without any proof; and without drawing a just character. On the contrary, the ancient Greeks made little use of these general terms, which prove nothing: but they insisted much on facts, and the

particulars of a character. For instance, Xenophon does not once say in all his Cyropædia, that Cyrus was an admirable man: but throughout the work he makes us really admire him. Thus is it, that we ought to praise holy persons, by entering into the particular detail of their sentiments and actions. But there prevails an affected politeness among the pedantic and conceited part of all ranks and professions, who value themselves upon their wit or learning. They never venture to use any expression, but what they reckon fine and uncommon. They talk always in a high strain;* and would think it beneath them to call things by their proper names. Now in true eloquence almost every thing may be introduced. The perfection of poetry itself, (which is the loftiest kind of composure) depends on a full and lively description of things in all their circumstances. When Virgil represents the Trojan fleet leaving the African shore, or arriving on the coast of Italy, you see every proper circumstance exactly described. But we must own that the Greeks entered still further into the particular detail of things; and followed nature more closely in representing the smallest circumstances. For which reason, many people would be apt (if they dared) to reckon Homer too plain and simple in his narrations. In this ancient, beautiful simplicity, (which few are able to relish,) this poet very much resembles the holy scripture: but in many places the sacred writings surpass his, as much as he excels all the other ancients, in a natural and lively representation of things.

* Prima est eloquentiæ virtus perspicuitas; et quo quisque ingenio minus valet, hoc se magis *attollere* et *dilatare* conatur; ut statura breves indigitos eriguntur; et plura infirmi minantur. Nam tumidos, et corruptos, et *tinnulos*, et quocumque alio cacozeliæ genere peccantes, certum habeo, non virium, sed *infirmitatis* vitio laborare; ut corpora non robore, sed valetudine, inflantur.

Quint. lib. ii. c. 3.

B. In relating facts, then, ought we to describe every individual circumstance that belongs to them?

A. No: we should represent nothing to the hearers but what deserves their attention; and helps to give a clear and just idea of the things we describe; so that it requires great judgment to make a right choice of circumstances.* But we must not be afraid of mentioning such as can be any way serviceable; for it is a false politeness that leads us to suppress some useful things, because we do not think them capable of any ornament. Besides, Homer has shown us by his example, that we might give a proper grace and embellishment to every subject.†

B. Seeing you condemn the florid, swelling style; what kind do you reckon fittest for public use?

A. There ought to be a variety of style in every discourse. We should rise in our expression when we speak of lofty subjects; and be familiar, in common ones, without being coarse, or grovelling.‡ In most cases, an easy simplicity and exactness is sufficient; though some things

* See Longinus, § x.

† First follow nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same;
Unerring nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchanged, and universal light;
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show; and without pomp presides.
Those rules of old discover'd, not devised,
Are nature still, but nature methodiz'd;
Nature, like monarchy, is but restrain'd
By the same laws which first herself ordained.

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

‡ Εστιν ἀρ' ὁ ιδιωτισμος ενιοτε του κοσμου παραπολυ εμφανιστικωτερον· επιγινωσκεται γαρ αυτοθεν εκ του κοι-

require vehemence, and sublimity. If a painter should draw nothing but magnificent palaces, he could not follow truth; but must paint his own fancies; and by that means soon cloy us. He ought to copy nature in its agreeable varieties; and after drawing a stately city, it might be proper to represent a desert, and the huts of shepherds. Most of those, who aim at making fine harangues, injudiciously labour to clothe all their thoughts in a pompous, gaudy dress;* and they fancy that they have succeeded happily, when they express some general remarks in a florid, lofty style. Their only care is to fill their discourse with abundance of ornaments, to please the vitiated taste of their audience; like ignorant cooks, who know not how to season dishes, in a proper, natural way; but fancy they must give them an exquisite relish by mixing excessive quantities of the most sea-

νου βιου· το δε συνηθες ηδη πιστοτερον——ταυτα γαρ εγγυς παραξει την ιδιωτην, αλλ' ουκ ιδιωτευει τῳ σημαντικῳ. LONGINUS, § XXXI.

"Affectation of every sort is odious, and more especially an affectation that betrays a minister into expressions fit only for the mouths of the illiterate. Truth, indeed, needs no ornament, neither does a beautiful person; but to clothe it therefore in rags, when a decent habit was at hand, would be esteemed preposterous and absurd. The best proportioned figure may be made offensive by beggary and filth; and even truths, which came down from Heaven, though they cannot forego their nature, may be disguised and disgraced by unsuitable language. He that speaks to be understood by a congregation of rustics, and yet in terms that would not offend academic ears, has found the happy medium. This is certainly practicable to men of taste and judgment, and the practice of a few proves it." *Cowper.*

* Namque illud genus ostentationi compositum, solum petit audientium voluptatem; ideoque omnes dicendi artes aperit, ornatumque orationis exponit—mala affectatio, per omne dicendi genus peccat. Nam et tumida, et exilia, et prædulcia, et abundantia, et arcessita, et exultantia sub idem nomen cadunt. Denique *κακοζηλον* vocatur, quicquid est ultra virtutem; quoties ingenium judicio caret, et specie boni falletur; omnium in eloquentia vitiorum pessimum; nam cætera cum vitentur, hoc petitur. *Quint. lib.* viii. c. 3.

soning things. But the style of a true orator has nothing in it that is swelling or ostentatious; he always adapts it to the subjects he treats of, and the persons he instructs; and manages it so judiciously that he never aims at being sublime and lofty, but when he ought to be so.*

* The style most fit for the pulpit is thus defined by Dr. FORDYCE. "I would call it, in a few words, simple, yet great; adorned, yet chaste; animated and strong, at the same time easy, and somewhat diffuse; and, in fine, numerous and flowing, without running into the poetical, or swelling into bombast."

Eloquence of the Pulpit.

I have been curious enough to take a list of several hundred words in a sermon of a new beginner, which not one of his hearers among a hundred could possibly understand; neither can I easily call to mind any clergyman of my own acquaintance who is wholly exempt from this error, although many of them agree with me in the dislike of the thing. But I am apt to put myself in the place of the vulgar, and think many words difficult or obscure, which the preacher will not allow to be so, because those words are obvious to scholars. I believe the method observed by the famous Lord Falkland, in some of his writings, would not be an ill one for young divines; I was assured by an old person of quality, who knew him well, that when he doubted whether a word was perfectly intelligible or not, he used to consult one of his lady's chambermaids, (not the waiting woman, because it was possible she might be conversant in romances,) and by her judgment was guided whether to receive or reject it. And if that great person thought such a caution necessary in treatises offered to the learned world, it will be sure at least as proper in sermons, where the meanest hearer is supposed to be concerned, and where very often a lady's chambermaid may be allowed to equal half the congregation, both as to quality and understanding. But I know not how it comes to pass, that professors in most arts and sciences are generally the worst qualified to explain their meanings to those who are not of their tribe; a common farmer shall make you understand in three words, that his foot is out of joint, or his collar-bone broken; wherein a surgeon, after a hundred terms of art, if you are not a scholar, shall leave you to seek. It is frequently the same case in law, physic, and even many of the meaner arts.

Swift's Letter to a Young Clergyman.

A man of merit and breeding you may disguise by putting him in the apparel of a clown, but you cannot justly find fault, that in that garb he meets not with the same reception in good company, that he would meet with if more suitably habited. The outward appearance is the first thing that strikes us in a person; the expression is the first thing that strikes us in a discourse. Take care at least, that in neither, there be any thing to make an unfavourable impression, which may preclude all further inquiry and regard. It was extremely well said by a very popular preacher in our own days, who, when consulted by a friend that had a mind to publish, whether he thought it befitting a writer on religion to

B. What you said concerning the language of scripture, makes me wish earnestly that you would show us the beauty of it. May we not see you some time to-morrow?

A. I shall hardly have time to-morrow; but I will endeavour to wait on you this evening. And since you seem so desirous of it, we will talk of the word of God; for hitherto we have only spoken of the language of men.

C. Farewell, Sir, I beg of you to be punctual; otherwise we must come and find you out.

attend to such little matters as grammatical correctness; answered, "By all means. It is much better to write so as to make a critic turn Christian, than so as to make a Christian turn critic." *Campbell on Pulpit Eloquence.*

THIRD DIALOGUE.

C. I Began to fear, Sir, that you would not come; and was very near going to seek for you at Mr. ——.

A. I was detained by a perplexing affair I had upon my hands: but I have got rid of it to my satisfaction.

B. I am very glad of it; for, we wanted you extremely to finish the subject we were talking of in the morning.

C. Since I parted with you, Sir, I heard a sermon at ——, and I thought of you. The preacher spoke in a very edifying manner: but I question whether the common people understood him or not.

A. It happens but too often (as I heard an ingenious lady observe,) that our preachers speak Latin in English. The most essential quality of a good preacher is to be instructive:* but he must have great abilities and experience to make him so.† On the one hand he must be

* As I take it, the two principal branches of preaching are, first, to tell the people what is their duty, and then to convince them that it is so. The topics for both these, we know, are brought from scripture and reason. Upon the former, I wish it were often practised to instruct the hearers in the limits, extent, and compass of every duty; which requires a good deal of skill and judgment; the other branch is, I think, not so difficult. But what I would offer upon both, is this, that it seems to be in the power of a reasonable clergyman, if he will be at the pains, to make the most ignorant man comprehend what is his duty, and to convince him by arguments drawn to the level of his understanding, that he ought to perform it. *Swift.*

† At the bar, in the senate, on the bench of justice, and in the chair of state, it is admitted that a sound and cultivated understanding is necessary. Shall a weak, honest man then, be deemed adequate to the discharge of duties which made the chiefest of the apostles exclaim, "who is sufficient for these things?" An illiterate physician injures our health; an unskilful advocate sacrifices our money; a weak general frustrates a campaign. What then? An incompetent

perfectly acquainted with the force of scripture expressions: on the other he must understand the capacity of those to whom he preaches; and adapt himself to it. Now this requires a solid knowledge, and great discernment. Preachers speak every day to people of the scripture, the church, the Mosaic law, the gospel; of sacrifices; of Moses and Aaron, and Melchisedec; of the prophets and apostles: but there is not sufficient care taken to instruct the people in the true meaning of these things, and in the characters of those holy persons. One might follow some preachers twenty years, without getting sufficient knowledge of religion.

B. Do you think that people are really ignorant of those things you mentioned?

C. For my part I believe they are; and that few or none understand them enough to receive any benefit from sermons.

spiritual guide endangers our *souls*. Talent and science are far, far less necessary to the *emperor*, than to the preacher. The former, may do his business by proxy; or if not done, still only temporal interests suffer. But the preacher's work is to be done by *himself*, and if done unskilfully, the evil is irreparable and eternal. Next to piety, he needs sound, practical good sense. He needs this, among a thousand reasons, to preserve him from mistaking affectation of originality, for great genius; rhapsody, for eloquence; and turgid declamation, for powerful instruction. To secure the respect of intelligent hearers, he needs a deep and steady judgment, and a thorough knowledge of men. Erasmus, who has been regarded as a sort of oracle on this subject, says; "It is not enough to know what should be spoken, without knowing when, to whom, how, with what words, in what order, with what ornament, with what action." God forbid, that talent or learning should be exalted at the expense of piety. "Let the collected wisdom of Greece and Rome bow before the cross. At the altar of God we would kindle the torch of science; and when kindled let it be quenched without scruple, if it does not, like the star of Bethlehem, conduct to the Saviour." But surely, he will be most likely to be an able instructor, who is himself wise and well instructed. With a good understanding, replenished by extensive reading, he can make his knowledge of languages, of oriental antiquities and usages, philosophy, logic, history, criticism and eloquence, all tributary to the grand purpose of explaining and enforcing the sacred truths of the bible. *Editor.*

B. That may be true of the lowest rank of people.

C. Well; ought not they to be instructed as well as others? Do not they make up the bulk of mankind?

A. The truth is, persons of rank and fashion have but little more knowledge of religion than the common people. There are always three fourth parts of an ordinary audience, who do not know those first principles of religion, in which the preacher supposes every one to be fully instructed.

B. Would you then have him explain the catechism in his sermons to a polite congregation?

A. I grant there is a due regard to be had to an audience; and discretion to be used in adapting a discourse to their capacity. But still without giving the least offence, a preacher might remind the most discerning hearers of those passages of the sacred history, which explain the origin and institution of holy things. This way of having recourse to the first foundations of religion, would be so far from seeming low, that it would give most discourses that force and beauty which they generally want. This is particularly true with regard to the mysteries of religion; for the hearers can never be instructed, nor persuaded, if you do not trace things back to their source. For example, how can you make them understand what the church says, after St. Paul,* that Jesus Christ is our Passover, if you do not explain to them the Jewish Passover, which was appointed to be a perpetual memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and to typify a more important redemption that was reserved for the Messiah. It is for this reason, I said that almost every thing in religion is historical. And if preachers would have a full knowledge of this truth, they must be very conversant in the scripture.

* 1 Cor. v. 7.

B. You must excuse my interrupting you on this subject; Sir, you told us in the morning, that the scriptures are eloquent; and I was glad to hear you say so. Let me intreat you to show us how we may discern the beauties of scripture; and in what its eloquence consists. The Latin Bible seems to me most vulgar and inaccurate. I see no delicacy in it. What is it then that you so much admire?

A. The Latin is only a literal version in which, out of respect to the original, there are many Greek and Hebrew phrases retained. Do you despise Homer because he has been sorrily translated into French?

B. But the Greek itself (which is the original language of the New Testament) appears to me very coarse and unpolite.

A. The apostles were not acquainted with the genuine Greek, but used that corrupted kind which prevailed among the Hellenistical Jews. For this reason St. Paul says* 'I am rude in speech,' but not in knowledge. It is very obvious that the apostle here only meant he was not a master of the Greek tongue; though he solidly explained the doctrine of the holy scripture.

C. Had not the apostles the gift of speaking unknown tongues?

A. Undoubtedly: and they even conveyed that gift to great numbers of their illiterate converts. But as for the languages that the apostles had learnt in a natural way, we have reason to believe that the Spirit of God permitted them to speak as they did before. St. Paul, who was a citizen of Tarsus, in Cilicia, naturally spake the corrupted Greek used among the Jews there; and we find that this is the language he wrote in. St. Luke seems to have understood Greek a little better.

* 2 Cor. xi. 16.

C. But I always thought that in the passage you mentioned, St. Paul gave up all pretences to oratory; and regarded nothing but the simplicity of the evangelical doctrine. Nay, I have heard several persons of worth and good judgment affirm, that the holy scripture is not eloquent. St. Jerom was punished for being disgusted at the simplicity of scripture; and liking Tully better. St. Austin (in his confessions) seems to have fallen into the same fault. Did not God intend to try our faith by the obscurity, and even by the lowness of the scripture-style, as well as by the poverty of our Redeemer?

A. You seem, Sir, to carry this point too far. Whether do you choose to believe St. Jerom, when he was punished for having followed his youthful studies too closely in his retreat; or when he had made the greatest progress both in sacred and profane learning; and, in an epistle to Paulinus, invited him to study the scripture; assuring him that he would find more charms in the prophets than he had discovered in the heathen poets? Or, was St. Austin's judgment better in his youth, when the seeming meanness of the sacred style disgusted him; than when he composed his books of the Christian Doctrine? There he often says, that St. Paul was powerfully persuasive; and that the torrent of his eloquence must be perceived by the most unattentive reader. He adds, that in the apostle, wisdom did not seek after the beauty of language; but that the beauties of language offered themselves, and attended his wisdom. He quotes many lofty passages of his epistles; wherein he shows all the art and address of the heathen orators far outdone. St. Austin excepts only two things in this comparison: he says, that these ora-

tors studied the ornaments of eloquence; but that the beauties of oratory naturally followed St. Paul, and others of the sacred writers. And then he owns that he did not sufficiently understand the delicacies of the Greek tongue, to be a competent judge, whether there be the same numbers and cadence of periods in the sacred text, that we meet with in profane authors. I forgot to tell you that he quotes that passage of the prophet Amos which begins thus, 'wo to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria:'* and assures us that in this place the prophet has surpassed every thing that is sublime in the heathen orators.

C. But how do you understand these words of St. Paul;† "my speech and my preaching was not with the enticing (persuasive) words of man's wisdom?" Does he not tell the Corinthians that he came not to preach Christ to them, with the sublimity of discourse and of wisdom; that he "knew nothing among them but Jesus, and him crucified:" that his preaching was founded, not upon the persuasive language of human wisdom and learning, but upon the sensible effects of the Spirit and the power of God; to the end (as he adds) "that their faith should not depend upon the wisdom of men, but on the power of God." What is the meaning of these words, Sir? What stronger expressions could the apostle use to condemn this art of persuasion that you would establish? For my part, I freely own that at first I was glad when you censured all those affected ornaments of discourse that vain declaimers are so fond of: but the sequel of your scheme does not answer the pious beginning of it. I find that you would still make preaching a human art, and banish apostolical simplicity from the pulpit.

* Ch. vi. † 1 Cor. xi. 4.

A. Though you judge very unfavourably of my esteem for eloquence, I am not dissatisfied at the zeal, with which you censure it. However, Sir, let us endeavour to understand one another aright. There are several worthy persons who judge, with you, that eloquent preaching is repugnant to the simplicity of the gospel. But when we have mutually explained our sentiments, perhaps they may be found to agree. What then do you mean by simplicity? And what do you call eloquence?

C. By simplicity, I mean a discourse without any artifice or magnificence. By eloquence, I mean a discourse full of art and ornaments.

A. When you require an artless, simple discourse, would you have it without order, and connexion; without solid and convincing proofs; and without a proper method for instructing the ignorant? Would you have a preacher say nothing that is pathetic, and never endeavour to affect the heart?

C. Far from it; I would have a discourse that both instructs and moves people.

A. That would make it eloquent; for we have seen before that eloquence is the art of instructing and persuading men, by moving their passions.

C. I grant that preachers ought to convince and affect their hearers; but I would have them to do it without art, by an apostolical simplicity.

A. The more artless and natural such a convincing, persuasive eloquence is, it must be the more powerful. But let us inquire whether the art of persuasion be inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel. What mean you by art?

C. I mean a system of rules that men have invented,

and usually observe in their discourses, to make them more beautiful, elegant, and pleasing.

A. If by art you only mean this invention to render a discourse more handsome and polished in order to please people; I will not dispute with you about words; but will readily acknowledge that this art ought not to be admitted into sermons; for, (as we agreed before,) this vanity is unworthy of eloquence, and far more unbecoming the sacred function. This is the very point about which I reasoned so much with Mr. B. But if by art and eloquence, you mean what the most judicious writers among the ancients understood, we must then set a just value upon eloquence.

C. What did they understand by it?

A. According to them the art of eloquence comprehends those means, that wise reflection and experience have discovered, to render a discourse proper to persuade men of the truth; and to engage them to love and obey it. And this is what you think every preacher should be able to do. For did you not say that you approved of order, and a right manner of instruction; solidity of reasoning, and pathetic movements; I mean such as can touch and affect people's hearts? Now this is what I call eloquence; you may give it what name you please.

C. Now I comprehend your notion of eloquence; and I cannot but acknowledge that such a manly, grave, serious manner of persuasion would much become the pulpit; and that it seems even necessary to instruct people with success. But how do you understand those words of St. Paul that I quoted before? Do they not expressly condemn eloquence?

A. In order to explain the apostle's words, let me ask you a few questions.

C. As many as you please, Sir.

A. Is it not true that the apostle argues with wonderful strength in his epistles? Does he not reason finely against the heathen philosophers, and the Jews, in his epistle to the Romans? Is there not great force, in what he says concerning the inability of the Mosaic law to justify men?

C. Certainly.

A. Is there not a chain of solid reasoning in his epistle to the Hebrews, about the insufficiency of the ancient sacrifices; the rest that David promised to the children of God, besides that which the Israelites enjoyed in Palestine after Joshua's days; concerning the order of Aaron, and that of Melchisedec; and the spiritual and eternal covenant that behoved to succeed the carnal and earthly one which was established by the mediation of Moses, for a time only? Are not the apostle's arguments on these several subjects very strong and conclusive?*

* The eloquence of St. Paul, in most of his speeches and argumentations, bears a very great resemblance to that of Demosthenes. Some important point being always uppermost in his view, he often leaves his subject, and flies from it with brave irregularity, and as unexpectedly again returns to his subject, when one would imagine that he had entirely lost sight of it. For instance, in his defence before king Agrippa, *Acts*, *chap.* xxvi., when, in order to wipe off the aspersions thrown upon him by the Jews, that *he was a turbulent and seditious person*, he sets out with clearing his character, proving the integrity of his morals, and his inoffensive, unblameable behaviour, as one who hoped, by those means, to attain that happiness of another life, for which the *twelve tribes served God continually in the temple;* on a sudden he drops the continuation of his defence, and cries out, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" It might be reasonably expected, that this would be the end of his argument; but by flying to it, in so quick and unexpected a *transition*, he catches his audience before they are aware, and strikes dumb his enemies, though they will not be convinced. And this point being once carried, he comes about again as unexpectedly, by, *I verily thought*, &c., and goes on with his defence, till it brings him again to the same point of the Resurrection, in verse 23. *Smith's Longinus.*

C. I think they are.

A. When St. Paul, therefore, disclaimed the use of "the persuasive words of man's wisdom," he did not mean to condemn true wisdom, and the force of reasoning.

C. That appears plainly from his own example.

A. Why then do you think that he meant to condemn solid eloquence, any more than true wisdom?

C. Because he expressly rejects eloquence in that passage, which I desired you to explain.

A. But doth he not likewise disclaim wisdom? The place seems to be more express against wisdom, and human reasoning, than against eloquence. And yet he himself reasoned frequently; and was very eloquent. You grant that he argued well; and St. Austin assures you that the apostle was an orator.

C. You plainly point out the difficulty; but you do not answer it. Pray, show us how it is to be solved.

A. St. Paul reasoned much; he persuaded effectually: so that he was really an excellent philosopher and an orator. But as he tells us in the place you quoted; his preaching was not founded on human reasoning, nor on the art of persuasion. It was a ministry of divine institution, that owed its efficacy to God alone.* The con-

* On the one hand, it deserves attention, that the most eminent and successful preachers of the gospel in different communities, a Brainerd, a Baxter, and a Schwartz, have been the most conspicuous for a simple dependance upon spiritual aid; and, on the other, that no success whatever has attended the ministrations of those by whom this doctrine has been either neglected or denied. They have met with such a rebuke of their presumption, in the total failure of their efforts, that none will contend for the reality of divine interposition, as far as *they are* concerned; for when has the arm of the Lord been revealed to those pretended teachers of Christianity, who believe there is no such arm? We must leave them to labour in a field, respecting which God has commanded the clouds not to rain upon it. As if conscious of this, of late they have turned their efforts into a new channel, and, despairing of the conversion of sinners, have confined

version of the whole world was, according to the ancient prophecies, to be the great and standing miracle of the Christian religion. This was the kingdom of God that came from heaven; and was to convert and reduce all the nations of the earth to the worship and service of the true God. Jesus Christ crucified, by his being declared to them, was to draw them all to himself merely by the power of his cross. The philosophers had reasoned and disputed, without converting either themselves, or others. The Jews had been intrusted with a law that showed them their miseries, but could not relieve them. All mankind were convinced of the general disorder and corruption that reigned among them. Jesus Christ came with his cross; that is, he came poor, humble, and suffering for us. To silence our vain, presumptuous reason, he did not argue like the philosophers; but he determined with authority. By his miracles, and his grace, he showed that he was above all. That he might confound the false wisdom of men, he sets before them the seeming folly and scandal of his cross; that is, the example of his profound humiliation. That, which mankind reckoned folly,* and at which they were most offended, was the very thing, that should convert and lead them to God. They wanted to be cured of their pride, and their excessive love of sensible objects: and to affect them the more, God showed them his Son crucified. The apostles preached him; and walked in his steps. They had not recourse to any human means,

themselves to the seduction of the faithful; in which, it must be confessed, they have acted in a manner perfectly consistent with their principles; the propagation of heresy requiring, at least, no *divine* assistance.

Hall on the discouragements and supports of the christian ministry.

* 1 Cor. i. 23, 25.

neither to philosophy, nor rhetoric, nor policy, nor wealth, nor authority. God would have the sole glory of his work: and the success of it, to depend entirely on himself: he therefore chose what is weak; and rejected what is strong; to display his power in the most sensible manner. He brought all out of nothing in the conversion of the world, as well as at the creation of it. That work therefore had this divine character stamped upon it, that it was not founded upon any thing that the world admired, or valued. It would only have weakened and frustrated the wonderful power of the cross (as St. Paul says*) to ground the preaching of the gospel upon natural means. It was necessary that without human help, the gospel should of itself open people's hearts; and by that prodigious efficacy show mankind that it came from God. Thus was human wisdom confounded, and rejected. Now, what must we conclude from hence? This only; that the conversion of the nations, and the establishment of the Christian church, was not owing to the learned reasonings, and persuasive words of man's wisdom. It does not imply that there was no eloquence, nor wisdom in several of those, who first preached the gospel: but only, that they did not depend on this eloquent wisdom; nor did they study it as a thing that was to give an efficacy to their doctrine. It was founded (as the apostle tells us†) not upon the persuasive discourses of human philosophy; but solely upon the effects of the Spirit, and the power of God; that is, upon the miracles that struck the eyes and minds of men, and upon the inward operation of the divine grace.

* 1 Cor. i. 17.

† Ουκ εν πειθοις ανθρωπινης σοφιας λογοις——
1 *Cor.* ii. 4.

C. According to your reasoning, then, they make void the efficacy of our Saviour's cross, who ground their preaching upon human wisdom and eloquence.

A. Undoubtedly. The ministry of the word is entirely built upon faith: and the preachers of it ought to pray and purify their hearts, and expect all their success from heaven. They should arm themselves with 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;' and not depend on their own abilities.* This is the necessary preparation for preaching the gospel. But though the inward fruit and success of it must be ascribed to grace alone, and the efficacy of God's word; there are yet some things that man is to do on his part.

C. Hitherto you have talked very solidly: but I see plainly you are now returning to your first opinion.

A. I did not change it. Do not you believe that the work of our salvation depends upon God's grace?

C. Yes; it is an article of faith.

A. You own, however, that we ought to use great prudence in choosing a right station and conduct in life;

* The preacher peculiarly needs assistance from heaven. He can neither rely on his own talents, nor trust his own heart. He cannot rely on his fellow-men. Whither then shall he look? Who shall make him able, or faithful, or successful in his work? Who shall open to him the treasures of divine truth? Who shall give him access to the hearts of his hearers, and enable him to speak in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power? Who shall sooth the anxieties that agitate his bosom, cheer his trembling spirit, and guide his footsteps, in seasons of despondence? Who shall give him that knowledge of his own heart, that controul of his temper and actions, that meekness, fortitude and exemplary holiness, which become his sacred office? In short, who shall secure him against falling into foul immorality, or fatal apostacy from the truth? Blessed be God, that a poor worm may ask and receive help from Him, in whom is everlasting strength. Weakness itself may look up with courage, to the throne of grace; and venture forward in the greatest work, relying on a Saviour's all sufficient aid. Yes, blessed be God, that the humble minister, while he feels himself to be less than nothing, may yet say without presumption; "I can do all things, through Christ which strengtheneth me." *Editor.*

and in avoiding dangerous temptations. Now, do we make void the grace of God, and its efficacy, by watching, and prayer, and a prudent circumspection? Certainly not. We owe all to God; and yet he obliges us to comply with an external order of human means. The apostles did not study the vain pomp, and trifling ornaments of the heathen orators. They did not fall into the subtile reasonings of the philosophers, who made all to depend upon those airy speculations in which they lost themselves. The apostles only preached Jesus Christ with all the force, and magnificent simplicity of the scripture language. It is true they had no need of any preparation for their ministry; because the Spirit, who descended upon them in a sensible manner, supplied them with words in preaching the gospel. The difference then betwixt the apostles, and their successors in the ministry, is, that these, not being miraculously inspired like the apostles, have need to prepare themselves, and to fill their minds with the doctrine and spirit of the scripture, to form their discourses. But this preparation should never lead them to preach in a more artless manner than the apostles. Would you not be satisfied if preachers used no more ornaments in their sermons than St. Peter, St. Paul, St. James, St. Jude, and St. John did?

C. I think I ought to require no more. And I must confess that since (as you say) eloquence consists chiefly in the order, force, and propriety of the words by which men are persuaded and moved; it does not give me so much offence as it did. I always reckoned eloquence to be an art that is inconsistent with the simplicity of the gospel.

A. There are two sorts of people that have this notion of it; the false orators, who are widely mistaken in

seeking after eloquence amidst a vain pomp of words; and some pious persons who have no great depth of knowledge: but though out of humility they avoid that false rhetoric, which consists in a gaudy, ostentatious style; they yet aim at true eloquence, by striving to persuade, and move their hearers.

C. I now understand your notions exactly well: let us now return to the eloquence of the scripture.

A. In order to perceive it, nothing is more useful than to have a just taste of the ancient simplicity: and this may best be obtained by reading the most ancient Greek authors.* I say the most ancient; for those Greeks whom the Romans so justly despised, and called Græculi, were then entirely degenerate. As I told you before, you ought to be perfectly acquainted with Homer, Plato, Xenophon, and the other earliest writers. After that, you will be no more surprised at the plainness of the scripture style; for in them you will find almost the same kind of customs, the same artless narrations, the same images of great things, and the same movements. The difference between them upon comparison is much to the honour of the scripture. It surpasses them vastly in native simplicity, liveliness, and grandeur. Homer himself never reached the sublimity of Moses' songs; especially the last, which all the Israelitish children were to learn by heart. Never did

* Ενδεικνυται δ' ἡμιν οὑτος ὁ ανηρ (ΠΛΑΤΩΝ) ει βουλοιμεθα μη κατολιγωρησαι, ὡς και ἀλλη τις παρα τα ειρημενα ὁδος επι τα ὑψηλα τεινει· Ποια δε και τις αὑτη; ἡ των εμπροσθεν μεγαλων συγγραφεων και ποιητων μιμησις τε και ζηλωσις· Και τουτου γε, φιλτατε, απριξ εχωμεθα του σκοπου. LONGINUS, § xiii.

any ode, either Greek, or Latin, come up to the loftiness of the Psalms; particularly that which begins thus;* 'The mighty God, even the Lord hath spoken,' surpasses the utmost stretch of human invention. Neither Homer nor any other poet ever equalled Isaiah† describing the majesty of God, in whose sight the 'nations of the earth are as the small dust; yea, less than nothing and vanity;' seeing it is 'He that stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.' Sometimes this prophet has all the sweetness of an eclogue, in the smiling images he gives us of peace; and sometimes he soars so high as to leave every thing below him. What is there in antiquity that can be compared to the Lamentations of Jeremiah, when he tenderly deplores the miseries of his country? or to the prophecy of Nahum, when he foresees, in spirit, the proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army. We fancy that we see the army, and hear the noise of arms and chariots. Every thing is painted in such a lively manner as strikes the imagination. The prophet far outdoes Homer. Read likewise Daniel denouncing to Belshazzar the divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him; and try if you can find any thing in the most sublime originals of antiquity that can be compared to those passages of sacred writ. As for the rest of scripture, every portion of it is uniform and consistent; every part bears the peculiar character that becomes it; the history, the particular detail of laws, the descriptions, the vehement and pathetic passages, the mysteries, and prophecies, and moral discourses; in all these

* Psal. l. 1—6. † Isaiah, xl. 9—28.——See chapters xi. and xxxv. Lam. i. 1, 2, 16, 20; ii. 1, 8, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21; iii. 39.——Nahum, i. 3, 5, 6; ii. 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10; iii. 3, 13, 17, 18.——Daniel, chap. v. 15—29.

there appears a natural and beautiful variety.* In short, there is as great a difference between the heathen poets, and the prophets; as there is between a false enthusiasm, and the true. The sacred writers, being truly inspired, do in a sensible manner express something divine: while the others, striving to soar above themselves, always show human weakness in their loftiest flights. The second book of Maccabees, the book of Wisdom, especially at the end, and Ecclesiasticus in the beginning, discover the gaudy, swelling style that the degenerate Greeks had spread over the east; where their language was established with their dominion. But it would be in vain to enlarge upon all these particulars; it is by reading that you must discover the truth of them.

* Any reader will observe, that there is a poetical air in the predictions of Balaam in the xxiii. chapter of *Numbers*, and that there is particularly an uncommon *grandeur* in verse 19.

"God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or, hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

What is the cause of this *grandeur* will immediately be seen, if the sense be preserved, and the words thrown out of interrogation:

God is not man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. What he hath said, he will do; and what he has spoke, he will make good." The difference is so visible, that it is needless to enlarge upon it.

How artfully does St. Paul, in *Acts* xxvi. transfer his discourse from *Festus* to *Agrippa*. In ver. 26, he speaks of him in the third person. "The King (says he) knoweth of these things, before whom I also speak freely——." Then in the following he turns short upon him; "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?" and immediately answers his own question, "I know that thou believest." The smoothest eloquence, the most insinuating complaisance, could never have made such impression on Agrippa, as this unexpected and pathetic address.

To these instances may be added the whole xxxviii. chapter of *Job;* where we behold the Almighty Creator expostulating with his creature, in terms which express at once the majesty and perfection of the one, the meanness and frailty of the other. There we see how vastly useful the figure of *interrogation* is, in giving us a lofty idea of the Deity, while every *question* awes us into silence, and inspires a sense of our own insufficiency. *Smith's Longinus.*

B. I long to set about it: we ought to apply ourselves to this kind of study, more than we do.

C. I easily conceive that the Old Testament is written with that magnificence; and those lively images you speak of. But you say nothing of the simplicity of Christ's words.

A. That simplicity of style is entirely according to the ancient taste. It is agreeable both to Moses and the prophets, whose expressions Christ often uses. But though his language be plain and familiar, it is however figurative and sublime in many places. I could easily show by particular instances, (if we had the books here to consult,) that we have not a preacher of this age who is so figurative in his most studied sermons, as Jesus Christ was in his most popular discourses. I do not mean those that St. John relates, where almost every thing is sensibly divine: I speak of his most familiar discourses recorded by the other evangelists. The apostles wrote in the same manner; with this difference; that Jesus Christ being master of his doctrine, delivers it calmly. He says just what he pleases; and speaks, with the utmost easiness, of the heavenly kingdom and glory, as of his father's house.* All those exalted things that astonish us, were natural and familiar to him: he is born there; and only tells us what he saw;† as he himself declares. On the contrary, the apostles‡ sunk under the weight of the truths that were revealed to them; they want words, and are not able to express their ideas.§ Hence flow those digressions

* John xiv. 2. † Chap. viii. 38. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4, 7.

§ Yet, after all, there is often found in the *apostolic* manner, a sublimity of sentiment, a pomp of description, a clearness, strength, and brevity of precept, a closeness of appeal, a force and abruptness of interrogation, a simplicity of words, and pathos of address, that are admirable in themselves, and worthy the imitation of every preacher. *Fordyce, Art of Preaching.*

and obscure passages in St. Paul's writings, and those transpositions of his thoughts, which show his mind was transported with the abundance and greatness of the truths that offered themselves to his attention. All this irregularity of style shows that the Spirit of God forcibly guided the minds of the apostles. But notwithstanding these little disorders of their style, every thing in it is noble, lively, and moving. As for St. John's Revelation, we find in it the same grandeur and enthusiasm that there is in the prophets. The expressions are ofttimes the same; and sometimes this resemblance of style gives a mutual light to them both. You see therefore that the eloquence of scripture is not confined to the books of the Old Testament; but is likewise to be found in the New.

C. Supposing the scripture to be eloquent, what will you conclude from it.

A. That those who preach it, may, without scruple, imitate, or rather borrow, its eloquence.

C. We find that preachers do choose those passages they think most beautiful.

A. But it mangles the scripture thus to show it to Christians only in separate passages. And however great the beauty of such passages may be, it can never be fully perceived, unless one knows the connexion of them: for, every thing in scripture is connected; and this coherence is the most great and wonderful thing to be seen in the sacred writings. For want of a due knowledge of it, preachers mistake those beautiful passages; and put upon them what sense they please. They content themselves with some ingenious interpretations; which, being arbitrary, have no force to persuade men, and to reform their manners.

B. What would you have preachers to do? Must they use only the language of scripture?

A. I would have them at least not think it enough to join together a few passages of scripture that have no real connexion. I would have them explain the principles, and the series of the scripture doctrine; and take the spirit, the style, and the figures of it, that all their discourses may serve to give people a right understanding, and true relish of God's word. There needs no more to make preachers eloquent; for by doing this, they would imitate the best model of ancient eloquence.

B. But in this case we behoved (as I said before) to explain the several parts of scripture as they lie.

A. I would not confine all preachers to this. One might make sermons upon the scripture without explaining the several parts of it as they lie. But it must be owned that preaching would be quite another thing, if, according to ancient custom, the sacred books were thus explained to the people in a connected, judicious manner. Consider what authority a man must have who should say nothing from his own invention; but only follow and explain the thoughts and words of God. Besides, he would do two things at once. By unfolding the truths of scripture, he would explain the text; and accustom the people to join always the sense and the letter together. What advantage must they not reap, if they were used to nourish themselves with this spiritual bread? An audience, who had heard the chief points of the Mosaic law explained, would be able to receive far more benefit from an explication of the truths of the gospel, than the greatest part of Christians are now. The preacher we spoke of before, has this failing among many great qualities, that his sermons are

trains of fine reasoning about religion; but they are not religion itself. We apply ourselves too much to drawing of moral characters, and inveighing against the general disorders of mankind; and we do not sufficiently explain the principles and precepts of the gospel.*

C. Preachers choose this way, because it is far easier to declaim against the follies and disorders of mankind, than to explain the fundamental truths and duties of religion judiciously. To be able to describe the corruptions of the age, they need only have some knowledge of men and things; and proper words to paint them. But to set the great duties of the gospel in a just light, requires an attentive meditation and study of the holy scriptures. There are but few preachers who have such a solid, comprehensive knowledge of religion as can en-

* See page 125; the note on that page was intended to be inserted here.

If I should read to a sick person a learned lecture on the benefit of health, and exhort him to take care to recover it, but never inquire into the nature of his disease; or prescribe proper methods and medicines for the cure, he would hardly acquiesce in me for his physician, or resign to me the care of his bodily health. Nor is it a more likely way to the soul's health, to rest in mere *general* exhortations to holiness, without distinctly handling the several branches thereof, and the opposite sins. If a man, professing physic, should administer or prescribe one constant medicine for fevers, and another for consumptions, and so for other distempers, without considering the age, constitution, strength, and way of living of his patient; and not vary his method and medicines as those vary, we should hardly call this the regular practice of physic. Nor can I think this general and undistinguished way will be more safe, or likely to answer its end, in divinity than in medicine. *Jennings.*

We do not warn the man whose house is on fire, by the abstract assurance that "fire is dangerous; by introducing a third person to say, "*he* is in danger;" by continually adverting to those noble public institutions, the general fire insurance companies. Nor must the delegated apostle of Christianity fail to discriminate, to individualize, to strike home, to draw the line between the form and spirit of religion; to show that the best church cannot of itself sanctify those who enter it; 'to speak,' as old Baxter says, 'like a dying man, to dying men;' to 'warn, rebuke, exhort,' like one who expects to meet his congregation next at the bar of God. *Christian Observer.*

able them to explain it clearly to others. Nay, there are some who make pretty discourses; and yet could not catechise the people, and far less make a good homily.

A. Very true; it is here that our preachers are most defective. Most of their fine sermons contain only philosophical reasonings. Sometimes they preposterously quote scripture only for the sake of decency or ornament; and it is not then regarded as the word of God; but as the invention of men.

C. You will grant, I hope, that the labours of such men tend to make void the cross of Christ.

A. I give them up; and contend only for the eloquence of scripture which evangelical preachers ought to imitate. So that we are agreed on this point; provided you will not excuse some zealous preachers, who, under pretence of apostolical simplicity, do not effectually study either the doctrine of scripture, or the powerful manner of persuasion that we are taught there. They imagine that they need only bawl, and speak often of hell and the devil. Now without doubt a preacher ought to affect people by strong, and sometimes even by terrible images; but it is from the scripture that he should learn to make powerful impressions. There he may clearly discover the way to make sermons plain and popular, without losing the force and dignity they ought always to have. For want of this knowledge a preacher oftentimes doth but stun and frighten people; so that they remember but few clear notions; and even the impressions of terror they received are not lasting. This mistaken simplicity that some affect, is too often a cloak for ignorance; and at best it is such an unedifying manner of address, as cannot be acceptable either to God or men. Nothing can excuse such homely preachers, but the sincerity of

their intentions. They ought to have studied and meditated much upon the word of God, before they undertook to preach. A priest who understands the scripture fully, and has the gift of speaking, supported by the authority of his function, and of a good life, might make excellent discourses without great preparation. For one speaks easily of such truths as make a clear and strong impression on his mind. Now above all things, such a subject as religion must furnish exalted thoughts; and excite the noblest sentiments; and this is the design of eloquence. But a preacher ought to speak to his audience as a father would talk to his children, with an affectionate tenderness;* and not like a declaimer, pro-

* In the most awful denunciations of the divine displeasure, an air of unaffected tenderness should be preserved, that while with unsparing fidelity we declare the whole counsel of God, it may appear we are actuated by a genuine spirit of compassion. A hard and unfeeling manner of denouncing the threatenings of the word of God, is not only barbarous and inhuman, but calculated, by inspiring disgust, to rob them of all their efficacy. If the awful part of our message, which may be stiled the burden of the Lord, ever fall with due weight on our hearers, it will be when it is delivered with a trembling hand and faultering lips; and we may then expect them to realize its solemn import, when they perceive that we ourselves are ready to sink under it. Of whom I have told you before, said St. Paul, and now tell you weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. What force does that affecting declaration derive from these tears! An affectionate manner insinuates itself into the heart, renders it soft and pliable, and disposes it to imbibe the sentiments and follow the impulse of the speaker. Whoever has attended to the effect of addresses from the pulpit, must have perceived how much of their impression depends upon this quality, which gives to sentiments comparatively trite, a power over the mind beyond what the most striking and original conceptions possess without it.

Hall on the discouragements and supports of the christian ministry.

There is another strain of preaching, which, though it wears the garb of zeal, is seldom a proof of any power but the power of self; I mean angry and scolding preaching. The Gospel is a benevolent scheme, and whoever speaks in the power of it, will assuredly speak in love. In the most faithful rebukes of sin, in the most solemn declarations of God's displeasure against it, a preacher may give evidence of a disposition of good-will and compassion to sinners, and assuredly will, if he speaks under the influence of the power of truth. If we can indulge invective and bitterness in the pulpit, we know not what spirit we are of; we

nouncing an harangue with stiffness, and an affected delicacy. It were to be wished indeed that, generally speaking, none were allowed to feed the christian flocks but their respective shepherds, who ought best to know their wants. In order to this, none should be chosen for pastors, but such as have the gift of preaching. The neglect of this occasions two evils; one is, that dumb pastors, and such as speak without abilities, are little esteemed. Another evil is, that the function of voluntary preachers allures many vain, ambitious spirits, that endeavour to distinguish themselves this way. You know that in former ages the ministry of the word was reserved for the bishops; especially in the western church. You must have heard of St. Austin's case; that, contrary to the established rule, he was obliged to preach while he was only a presbyter; because that Valerius his bishop and predecessor, was a stranger who could not talk easily; this was the beginning of that custom in the western parts. In the east, priests sooner began to preach; as appears from St. Chrysostom's sermons, which he made at Antioch, when he was only a presbyter.

C. I grant that generally speaking the office of preaching should be reserved for the parochial clergy. This would be the way to restore to the pulpit that simplicity and dignity that ought to adorn it. For if pastors joined

are but gratifying our own evil tempers, under the pretence of a concern for the cause of God and truth. A preacher of this character, instead of resembling a priest bearing in his censer hallowed fire taken from God's altar, may be compared to the madman described in the Proverbs, who scattereth at random firebrands, and arrows, and death, and saith, Am not I in sport? Such persons may applaud their own faithfulness and courage, and think it a great attainment that they can so easily and constantly set their congregation at defiance; but they must not expect to be useful, so long as it remains a truth, that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. NEWTON.

the knowledge of the scriptures to their experience in the ministerial function, and the conduct of souls; they would speak in such a way as is best adapted to the wants of their flocks. Whereas those preachers who give up themselves chiefly to study and speculation, are less able to obviate people's prejudices and mistakes; they do not suit their discourses to vulgar capacities; and insist chiefly on such general points as do not instruct nor affect men; to say nothing of the weight and influence that the shepherd's own voice must have among his flock, above a stranger's. These, methinks, are convincing reasons for preferring a pastor's sermons before other people's. Of what use are so many young preachers, without experience, without knowledge, and without piety? It were better to have fewer sermons, and more judicious ones.

B. But there are many priests who are not pastors, and who preach with great success. How many persons are there of the religious orders, who fill the pulpit to advantage?

C. I own there are many; and such men ought to be made pastors of parishes; and even be constrained to undertake the care of souls. Were not anchorets of old forced from their beloved solitude, and raised to public stations, that the light of their piety might shine in the church, and edify the faithful?

A. But it does not belong to us to regulate the discipline of the church. Every age has its proper customs, as the circumstances of things require. Let us show a regard to whatever the church tolerates; and, without indulging a censorious humour, let us finish our character of a worthy preacher.

C. What you have said already gives me, I think, an exact idea of it.

A. Let us hear then what you reckon necessary to make a complete preacher.

C. I think that he ought to have studied solidly, during his younger days, whatever is most useful in the poetry and eloquence of the ancients.*

A. That is not necessary. It is true, when one has finished such studies successfully, they may be of use to him, even towards a right understanding of the scriptures: as St. Paul has shown in a treatise he composed on this very subject. But after all, this sort of study is rather useful than necessary. In the first ages of the church, the clergy found a want of this kind of learning. Those indeed who had applied themselves to it, in their youth, turned it to the service of religion, when they became pastors: but such as had neglected these studies before, were not permitted to follow them, when they had once engaged themselves in the study of the sacred writings; which were then reckoned to be sufficient. Hence came that passage in the Apostolical Constitutions,† which exhorts Christians not to read the heathen authors. 'If you want history, (says the book,) or laws, or moral precepts, or eloquence, or poetry, you will find them all in the scriptures.' In effect we have already seen that it is needless to seek elsewhere, for any thing that is necessary to form our taste and judgment of true eloquence. St. Austin says that the smaller stock we have of other learning, we ought so much the more to

* The Greek and Roman authors have a spirit in them, a force, both of thought and expression, that latter ages have not been able to imitate; Buchanan only excepted; in whom, more particularly in his Psalms, there is a beauty, and life, an exactness as well as a liberty, that cannot be imitated, and scarce enough commended.

Discourse of the pastoral care, ch. viii.

† B. i. c. 6.

enrich ourselves out of that sacred treasure; and that seeing our notions are too scanty to express divine things in a proper way, we have need to exalt and improve our knowledge, by the authority of Scripture; and our language, by the dignity of its expressions. But I ask your pardon for interrupting you. Go on, Sir, if you please.

C. Well then; let us be content with the sufficiency of scripture. But shall we not add the fathers?

A. Without doubt; they are the channels of tradition. It is by their writings that we learn the manner in which the church interpreted the scripture in all ages.

C. But are preachers obliged to explain every passage of scripture according to the interpretations that the fathers have given us. We find that one father gives a spiritual or mystical sense; and another gives a literal one. Now which must we choose? for there would be no end of mentioning them all.

A. When I affirm that we ought to interpret the scripture according to the doctrine of the fathers; I mean, their constant and uniform doctrine. They frequently gave pious interpretations that differed very much from the literal sense; and were not founded on the prophetical allusions, and the mysterious doctrines of religion. Now seeing these interpretations are arbitrary, we are not obliged to follow them; 'seeing they did not follow one another.' But in those places where they explain the sentiments of the church concerning points of faith or practice; it is not allowable to explain the scripture in a sense contrary to the doctrine of the fathers. This is the authority that we ought to ascribe to them.

C. This seems clear enough. I would therefore have a clergyman (before he begin to preach) be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the fathers, that he may follow it. I would even have him study the principles they laid down for their conduct; their rules of moderation; and their method of instruction.

A. Right; they are our masters. They had an exalted genius: they had great and pious souls, full of heroical sentiments. They had a singular knowledge of the tempers and manners of men; and acquired a great repute; and a very easy way of preaching. We even find that many of them were very polite, and knew whatever is decent, either in writing or speaking in public; and what is handsome both in familiar conversation, and in discharging the common duties of life. Doubtless all this must have conduced to render them eloquent; and fit to gain upon people's minds. Accordingly we find in their writings a politeness not only of language, but of sentiments and manners; which is not to be seen in the writers of the following ages. This just taste and discernment, (which agrees perfectly well with simplicity, and rendered their persons acceptable, and their behaviour engaging) was highly serviceable to religion. And in this point we can scarce imitate them enough. So that after the scriptures, the knowledge of the fathers will help a preacher to compose good sermons.

C. When one has laid such a solid foundation, and edified the church by his exemplary virtues; he would then be fit to explain the gospel with great authority, and good effect. For by familiar instructions, and useful conferences, (to which we suppose him to have been aucustomed betimes,) he must have attained a sufficient

freedom and easiness of speaking. Now if such pastors applied themselves to all the particular duties of their function, as administering the sacraments; directing pious souls; and comforting afflicted, or dying persons; it is certain they could not have much time to make elaborate sermons, and learn them word for word. 'The mouth behoved to speak from the abundance of the heart;'* and communicate to the people the fulness of gospel-knowledge, and the affecting sentiments of the preacher. As for what you said yesterday, about getting sermons by heart, I had the curiosity to seek out a passage in St. Austin that I had read before: it is to this purpose: 'He thinks that a preacher ought to speak in a more plain and sensible manner than other people: for, seeing custom and decency will not permit his hearers to ask him any questions; he should be afraid of not adapting his discourse to their capacity. Wherefore,' says he, 'they, who get their sermons by heart, word for word, and so cannot repeat and explain a truth till they see that their hearers understand it, must lose one great end and benefit of preaching.' You see by this, Sir, that St. Austin only prepared his subject, without burdening his memory with all the words of his sermons. Though the precepts of true eloquence should require more; yet the rules of the gospel-ministry will not permit us to go farther. As for my own part, I have been long of your opinion concerning this matter; because of the many pressing necessities in the Christian church, that require a pastor's continual application. While a priest, who ought to be 'a man of God,† thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' should be diligent in rooting out ignorance and offences from the field of the church; I think

* Matth. xii. 34. † 2 Tim. iii. 17.

it unworthy of him to waste his time in his closet, in smoothing of periods; giving delicate touches to his descriptions; and inventing quaint divisions. When one falls into the method and employment of these pretty preachers, he can have no time to do any thing else; he applies himself to no other business, or useful kind of study: nay, to refresh himself, he is oftentimes forced to preach the same sermons over and over again. But what kind of eloquence can a preacher attend to, when his hearers know beforehand all the expressions, and pathetic figures he will use. This is a likely way indeed, to surprise and astonish; to soften, and move, and persuade them. This must be a strange manner of concealing one's art; and of letting nature speak. To tell you freely, Sir, this gives me great offence. What! shall a dispenser of the divine mysteries be an idle declaimer, jealous of his reputation, and fond of vain pomp?* Shall he not dare to speak of God to his people, without having ranged all his words, and learned his lesson by heart like a school boy?

A. I am very much pleased with your zeal. What you say is true. But we must not however inveigh against this abuse with too much violence: for we ought to show a regard to persons of worth and piety, who, out of deference to custom, or being prepossessed by example, have, with a good design, fallen into the method that

* Sed his ornatus (repetam enim) virilis, fortis et sanctus sit—non debet quisquam ubi *maxima* rerum *momenta* versantur, de verbis esse sollicitus—prima virtus est vitio carere. Igitur ante omnia, ne speremus ornatam orationem fore, quæ probabilis non erit. *Probabile* autem, Cicero id genus dicit, quod non plus, minusve est quam decet. Non quia comi expolirique non debeat; nam et hæc ornatus pars est; sed quia vitium est, ubique quod nimium est. Itaque vult esse auctoritatem et pondus in verbis: sententias vel graves, vel aptas opinionibus hominum ac moribus.

Quintil. lib. viii. *c.* 3.

you justly censure. But I am ashamed to interrupt you so often. Go on, I beseech you.

C. I would have a preacher explain the whole plan of religion; and unfold every part of it, in the most intelligible manner; by showing the primitive institution of things; and pointing out the sequel and tradition of them: that, by showing the origin and establishment of religion, he might destroy the objections of unbelievers, without offering to attack them openly: lest he should thereby lay a stumbling block in the way of illiterate, well meaning Christians.*

* Particular care ought to be taken in expounding the scriptures to the people, not to appear over-learned and over-critical in one's explications. There is no occasion to obtrude on an audience, as some do, all the jarring interpretations given by different commentators, of which it is much better that the people should remain ignorant, than that they should be apprized. For this knowledge can serve no other purpose, than to distract their thoughts and perplex their judgment. Before you begin to build, it is necessary to remove such impediments, as lie directly in your way; but you could not account him other than a very foolish builder, who should first collect a deal of rubbish, which was not in his way, and consequently could not have obstructed his work, that he might have the pleasure and merit of removing it. And do the fantastic, absurd, and contradictory glosses of commentators deserve a better name than rubbish? No, surely. But if such absurd glosses are unknown to your congregation, they are rubbish which lies not in your way. No interpretation therefore or gloss should ever be mentioned in order to be refuted, unless it be such as the words themselves on a superficial view, might seem to countenance, or such as is generally known to the people to be put upon them by some interpreters, or sects of Christians. Where a false gloss cannot be reasonably supposed to be either known or thought of by the audience, it is in the preacher worse, than being idly ostentatious of his learning, to introduce such erroneous gloss or comment. And as to an excess of criticism in this exercise, it ought also doubtless carefully to be avoided. We must always remember the difference between a church and a college. In most christian congregations there are very few, if any, linguists. I do not say that in our lectures we ought never to mention the original or recur to it. Justice to the passage we explain may sometimes require it. Nor is it necessary, that our translators should be deemed infallible even by the multitude. It is enough, that we consider as the pure dictates of the Spirit those intimations, with which the prophets and apostles were inspired. But then, on the other hand, it is neither modest nor prudent in the preacher, especially if a young man, to be at every turn censuring the translators, and pretending to mend their ver-

A. That is very right. The best way of proving the truth of religion, is to explain it justly; for it carries its own evidence along with it, when we represent it in its native purity. All other proofs that are not drawn from the very foundation of religion itself, and the manner of its propagation, are but foreign to it. Thus, for instance, the best proof of the creation of the world, of the deluge, and the miracles of Moses, may be drawn from the nature of those miracles; and the artless, impartial manner in which the Mosaic history is written. A wise, unprejudiced person needs only to read it, to be fully convinced of its truth.

sion. It is not modest, as they, over whom the corrector assumes a superiority, are allowed on all hands to have been men of eminent talents and erudition. And it is not prudent, as this practice never fails to produce in the minds of the people a want of confidence in their Bible, which tends greatly to lessen its authority. Therefore, though I am by no means for ascribing infallibility to any human expositors, propriety requires, that we should neither too often, nor too abruptly tax with blundering, before such a promiscuous audience as our congregations commonly are, men of so respectable memory. Manly freedom of inquiry, becoming a protestant, becoming a Briton, tempered with that decent reserve which suits the humble Christian, will guard the judicious against both extremes, an overweaning conceit of his own abilities, and an implicit faith in those of others. And indeed in regard to every thing, which may be introduced either in the way of criticism or comment, it ought ever to be remembered, that it is not enough, that such an observation is just, that such an interpretation hath actually been given, or that such an opinion hath been maintained; the previous inquiry, which the preacher ought to make by himself is, whether it be of any consequence to the people to be informed of the observation, comment, or opinion. This inquiry impartially made will prove a check against the immoderate indulgence of what is perhaps the natural bent of his own genius, whether it be to critical or controversial disquisition, and which it is not always easy for youth, commonly impetuous and opinionative, duly to restrain. If on other occasions, more especially on this, the apostolical admonition ought to be sacredly observed, that "nothing proceed out of the speaker's mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers." But for our direction in this kind of discernment, no precepts, it must be acknowledged, will suffice. A fund of good sense is absolutely necessary, enlightened by a knowledge of mankind. In this, as in every other kind of composition, the maxim of the poet invariably holds,

Scribendi recte sapere est principium et fons.

Campbell on pulpit eloquence.

C. I would likewise have a preacher assiduously explain to the people in a connected train not only all the particular precepts and mysteries of the gospel, but likewise the origin and institution of the sacraments; the traditions, discipline, the liturgy, and ceremonies of the church. By these instructions he would guard the faithful against the objections of heretics; and enable them to give an account of their faith; and even to affect such heretics as are not obstinate: he would strengthen people's faith, give them an exalted notion of religion; and make them receive some edification and benefit from what they see in the church. Whereas with the superficial instruction that is generally given them at present, they comprehend little or nothing of what they see; and have but a very confused idea of what they hear from the preacher. It is chiefly for the sake of this connected scheme of instruction that I would have fixed persons, such as pastors, to preach in every parish. I have often observed that there is no art, nor science, that is not taught coherently by principles and method, in a connected train of instructions. Religion is the only thing that is not taught thus to Christians. In their childhood they have a little, dry catechism put into their hands, which they learn by rote, without understanding the sense of it. And after that, they have no other instruction but what they can gather from sermons upon unconnected, general subjects. I would therefore, (as you said) have preachers teach people the first principles of their religion; and, by a due method, lead them on to the highest mysteries of it.

A. That was the ancient way. They began with catechising; after which, pastors taught their people the several doctrines of the gospel, in a connected train of

homilies. This instructed Christians fully in the word of God: you know St. Austin's book, of 'catechising the ignorant;' and St. Clement's tract, which he composed, to show the heathen whom he converted what were the doctrines and manners of the christian philosophy. In those days the greatest men were employed in these catechetical instructions; and accordingly they produced such wonderful effects, as seem quite incredible to us.

C. In fine, I would have every preacher make such sermons as should not be too troublesome to him; that so he might be able to preach often. They ought therefore to be short; that without fatiguing himself or wearying the people he might preach every Sunday after the gospel. As far as we can judge, those aged bishops who lived in former times, and had constant labours to employ them, did not make such a stir as our modern preachers do in talking to the people in the midst of divine service; which the bishops themselves read solemnly every Lord's day.* A preacher now-a-days gets little credit unless he comes out of the pulpit sweating and breathless; and unable to do any thing the rest of the day. The bishop's upper vestment, (which was not then

* A clergyman must bring his mind to an inward and feeling sense of those things that are *prayed* for in our *offices:* this will make him pronounce them with an equal measure of gravity and affection; and with a due slowness and emphasis. I do not love the theatrical way of the church of Rome, in which it is a great study, and a long practice, to learn in every one of their offices, how they ought to compose their looks, gesture, and voice; yet a light wandering of the eyes, and a hasty running through the prayers, are things highly unbecoming: they very much lesson the majesty of our worship; and give our enemies advantage to call it *dead* and *formal;* when they see plainly that he who officiates, is dead and formal in it. A deep sense of the things prayed for, a true recollection and attention of spirit, and a holy earnestness of soul, will give a composure to the look, and a weight to the pronunciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and levity on the other.

Discourse of the pastoral care, ch. viii.

opened at the shoulders as it is now, but hung equally down on all sides,) probably hindered him from moving his arms, as some preachers do. So that as their sermons were short, so their action must have been grave and moderate. Now, Sir, is not all this agreeable to your principles? is not this the idea you gave us of good preaching?

A. It is not mine: it is the current notion of all antiquity. The farther I inquire into this matter, the more I am convinced that the ancient form of sermons was the most perfect. The primitive pastors were great men: they were not only very holy, but they had a complete, clear knowledge of religion, and of the best way to persuade men of its truth: and they took care to regulate all the circumstances of it. There is a great deal of wisdom, hidden under this air of simplicity: and we ought not to believe that a better method could have been afterwards found out. You have set this whole matter in the best light, and have left me nothing to add: indeed you have explained my thoughts better than I should have done myself.

B. You magnify the eloquence, and the sermons of the fathers mightily.

A. I do not think that I commend them too much.

B. I am surprised to see, that after you have been so severe against those orators, who mix turns of wit with their discourses, you should be so indulgent to the fathers, whose writings are full of jingling antitheses, and quibbles, entirely contrary to all your rules. I wish you would be consistent with yourself. Pray, Sir, unfold all this to us. Particularly, what do you think of Tertullian?

A. There are many excellent things in him. The

loftiness of his sentiments is oftentimes admirable. Besides, he should be read for the sake of some principles concerning tradition, some historical facts, and the discipline of his time. But as for his style, I do not pretend to justify it. He has many false and obscure notions, many harsh and perplexed metaphors; and the generality of readers are most fond of his faults. He has spoiled many preachers.* For, the desire of saying something that is singular leads them to study his works;†

* One of the greatest and most remarkable proofs of the strong influence that some imaginations have over others, is the power that some others have to persuade, without any proof. For example, the turn of words that we find in Tertullian, Seneca, Montaigne, and some other authors, has so many charms, and so much lustre, that they dazzle most readers—their *words*, however insignificant, have more force than the *reasons* of other people—I protest I have a great value for some of Tertullian's works; and chiefly for his *Apology* against the *Gentiles;* his book of *Prescriptions* against heretics; and for some passages of Seneca; though I have very little esteem for Montaigne. Tertullian was indeed a man of great learning; but he had more memory than judgment—the regard he shewed to the visions of Montanus, and his prophetesses, is an unquestionable proof of his weak judgment. The disorder of his imagination sensibly appears in the heat, the transports, and enthusiastic flights he falls into, upon trifling subjects—what could he infer from his pompous descriptions of the changes that happen in the world? Or how could they justify his laying aside his usual dress to wear the philosophical cloak? The moon has different phases; the year has several seasons; the fields change their appearance in summer and winter; whole provinces are drowned by inundations, or swallowed up by earthquakes—in fine, all nature is subject to changes; therefore he had reason to wear the cloak rather than the common robe!—nothing can excuse the silly arguments and wild fancies of this author, who, in several others of his works, as well as in that *de Pallio*, says every thing that comes into his head, if it be a far fetched conceit, or a bold expression; by which he hoped to show the vigour, (we must rather call it, the disorder) of his imagination. *Malebranche's recherche de la verite. Liv.* ii. *p.* 3. *c.* 3.

† Eccentricity is sometimes found connected with genius, but it does not coalesce with true wisdom. Hence men of the first order of intellect, have never betrayed it; and hence also men of secondary talents drop it as they grow wiser; and are satisfied to found their consequence on real and solid excellency, not on peculiarity and extravagance. They are content to awaken regard, and obtain applause by the rectitude and gracefulness of their going, rather than to make passengers stare and laugh by leaping over the wall or stumbling along the

and his uncommon pompous style dazzles them. We must, therefore, beware of imitating his thoughts or expressions, and only pick out his noble sentiments, and the knowledge of antiquity.

B. What say you of St. Cyprian? Is not his style too swelling?

A. I think it is; and it could scarce be otherwise in his age and country. But though his language has a tang of the African roughness, and the bombast which prevailed in his days; yet there is great force and eloquence in it. Every where we see a great soul, who expresseth his sentiments in a very noble, moving manner. In some places of his works we find affected ornaments;* especially in his epistle to Donatus; which St. Austin quotes, however, as a letter full of eloquence. He says, that God permitted those strokes of vain oratory to fall from St. Cyprian's pen, to show posterity how much the spirit of christian simplicity had, in his following works, retrenched the superfluous ornaments of his style; and reduced it within the bounds of a grave and modest eloquence. This, says St. Austin, is the distin-

road. True greatness is serious; trifling is beneath its dignity. We are more indebted to the regular, sober, constant course of the sun, than to the glare of the comet; the one indeed occupies our papers, but the other enriches our fields and gardens; we gaze at the strangeness of the one, but we live by the influ- of the other. *Jay.*

* Locus enim cum die convenit, et mulcendis sensibus, ac fovendis, ad lenes auras blandientis autumni hortorum facies amœna consentit. Hic jucundum sermonibus diem ducere, et studentibus fabulis in divina præcepta conscientiam pectoris erudire. Ac ne colloquium nostrum arbiter profanus impediat, aut clamor intemperans familiæ strepentis obtundat, petamus hanc sedem. Dant secessum vicina secreta, ubi dum erratici palmitum lapsus nexibus pendulis per arundines bajulus repunt, viteam porticum frondea tecta fecerunt; bene hic studia in aures damus; et dum in arbores, et in vites quas videmus, oblectante prospectu, oculos amœnamus, animum simul et auditus instruit, et pascit obtutus.

Cypr. Ad Donat. Epist.

guishing character of all the Letters which St. Cyprian wrote afterwards; which we may safely admire and imitate, as being written according to the severest rules of religion; though we cannot hope to come up to them without a great application. In fine; though his letter to Donatus, even in St. Austin's opinion, be too elaborately adorned; it deserves, however, to be called eloquent. For, notwithstanding its many rhetorical embellishments, we cannot but perceive that a great part of the epistle is very serious and lively; and most proper to give Donatus a noble idea of Christianity. In those passages where he is very earnest, he neglects all turns of wit, and falls into a sublime and vehement strain.

B. But what do you think of St. Austin? Is he not the most jingling quibbler that ever wrote?* Will you defend him?

A. No; I cannot vindicate him in that. It was the reigning fault of his time; to which his quick, lively fancy naturally inclined him. This shows that he was not a perfect orator. But notwithstanding this defect, he had a great talent for persuasion. He reasoned gen-

* Misi nuncios meos omnes et sensus interiores, ut quaererem te, et non inveni, quia male quærebam. Video enim, lux mea, Deus qui illuminasti me, quia te per illos quærebam quia tu es intus, et tamen ipsi ubi intraveris, nescierunt—et tamen cum Deum meum quæro, quæro nihilominus quandam lucem, quam non capit oculus; quandam vocem super omnem vocem, quam non capit auris; quendam odorem super omnem odorem, quem non capit naris; quendam dulcorem superomnem dulcorem, quem non capit gestus; quendam amplexum super omnem amplexum, quem non capit tactus. Ista lux quidem fulget ubi locus non capit; ista vox sonat, ubi spiritus non rapit; odor iste redolet, ubi flatus, non spargit; sapor iste sapit ubi non est edacitas; amplexus iste tangitur, ubi non divellitur. Aug. *Solil.* ℣. 31.

O dies præclara et pulchra, nesciens vesperum, non habens occasum—ubi non erit hostis impugnans, neque ulla illecebra, sed summa et certa securitas, secura tranquillitas, et tranquilla jocunditas, jocunda felicitas, fœlix æternitas, æterna beatitudo, et beata Trinitas, et Trinitatis unitas, et unitatis Deitas, et Deitatis beata visio, quæ est gaudium Domini Dei tui. Aug. *Solil.* ℣. 35.

erally with great force; and he is full of noble notions. He knew the heart of man entirely well, and was so polite, that he carefully observed the strictest decency in all his discourses. In short he expressed himself almost always in a pathetic, gentle, insinuating manner. Now ought not the fault we observe in so great a man to be forgiven?

C. I must own there is one thing in him that I never observed in any other writer: I mean, that he has a moving way, even when he quibbles. None of his works are more full of jingling turns, than his confessions, and soliloquies; and yet we must own they are tender,* and apt to affect the reader.

A. It is because he checks the turns of his fancy as much as he can by the ingenuous simplicity of his pious, affecting sentiments. All his works plainly show his love of God. He was not only conscious of it; but knew well how to express to others the strong sense he had of it. Now this tender, affecting way, is a part of eloquence. But we see besides that St. Austin knew exactly all the essential rules of it. He tells us† that a persuasive discourse must be simple and natural; that art must not appear in it; and that if it be too fine and elaborate, it puts the hearers upon their guard.‡ To

* Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. Sitivit anima mea ad te Deum, fontem vivum; quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem tuam? O fons vitæ, vena aquarum viventium; quando veniam ad aquas dulcedinis tuæ de terra deserta, invia et inaquosa; ut videam virtutem tuam, et gloriam tuam, et *satiem* ex aquis misericordiæ tuæ *sitim* meam? *sitio*, Domine, fons vitæ es, *satia* me. Sitio, Domine, sitio te Deum vivum; O quando veniam et apparebo, Domine, ante faciem tuam?

Aug. *Solil. cap.* xxxv.

† De doct. Chr. 1, 2.

‡ "There is a false eloquence, in being ambitious to say every thing with spirit, and turn all things with delicacy.—If you would attain to true eloquence, you must first lay aside the passion for appearing eloquent. So long as you have vain, ambitious views, you will never preach well, and you will never become truly eloquent." *Ostervald's Lect.* iv.

this purpose he applies these words, which you cannot but remember, 'qui sophistice loquitur odibilis est.' He talks likewise very judiciously of the mixing different kinds of style in a discourse; of ranging the several parts of it in such a manner as to make it increase gradually in strength and evidence; of the necessity of being plain and familiar, even as to the tones of the voice, and our actions in particular passages; though every thing we say should still have a dignity when we preach religion. In fine, he likewise shows the way to awaken and move people. These are St. Austin's notions of eloquence. But if you would see with how much art he actually influenced people's minds, and with what address he moved their passions, according to the true design of eloquence; you must read the account he gives of a discourse he made to the people of Cæsarea, in Mauritania, in order to abolish a barbarous practice. It seems there prevailed among them an ancient custom, which they had carried to a monstrous pitch of cruelty. His business therefore was to draw off the people from a spectacle that delighted them extremely. Judge now what a difficult enterprise this was. However, he tells us that after he had talked to them for some time, they spake aloud and applauded him.

But he concluded that his discourse had not persuaded them, seeing they amused themselves in commending him. He thought he had done nothing while he only raised delight and admiration in his hearers; nor did he begin to hope for any good effect from his discourse, till he saw them weep. "In effect," says he, "the people were at length prevailed on to give up this delightful spectacle; nor has it been renewed these eight years." Is not St. Austin then a true orator? Have we any preachers that are able to talk so powerfully now? As

for St. Jerom, he has some faults in his style: but his expressions are manly and great. He is not regular; but he is far more eloquent than most of those who value themselves upon their oratory. We should judge like mere grammarians if we examined only the style and language of the fathers. You know there is a great difference between eloquence, and what we call elegance, or purity, of style. St. Ambrose likewise fell into the fashionable defects of his time; and gives his discourse such ornaments as were then in vogue. Perhaps these great men, (who had higher views than the common rules of rhetoric,) conformed themselves to the prevailing taste of the age they lived in, that they might the better insinuate the truths of religion upon people's minds, by engaging them to hear the word of God with pleasure. But notwithstanding the puns and quibbles that St. Ambrose sometimes uses, we see that he wrote to Theodosius with an inimitable force and persuasion. How much tenderness does he express when he speaks of the death of his brother Satyrus? In the Roman breviary we have a discourse of his, concerning John the Baptist's head, which, he says, Herod respected and dreaded, even after his death. If you observe that discourse, you will find the end of it very sublime. St. Leo's style is swelling, but truly noble. Pope Gregory lived still in a worse age: and yet he wrote several things with much strength and dignity. We ought to distinguish those failings into which the degeneracy of arts and learning led these great men, in common with other writers of their several ages; and at the same time observe what their genius and sentiments furnished them with, to persuade their hearers.

C. But do you think then that the taste of eloquence

was quite lost in those ages that were so happy for religion?

A. Yes: within a little time after the reign of Augustus, eloquence, and the Latin tongue began to decline apace. The fathers did not live till after this corruption; so that we must not look on them as complete models. We must even acknowledge that most of the sermons they have left us are composed with less skill and force, than their other works. When I showed you from the testimony of the fathers that the scripture is eloquent; (which you seemed to believe upon their credit;) I knew very well that the oratory of these witnesses, is much inferior to that of sacred writings themselves. But there are some persons of such a depraved taste, that they cannot relish the beauties of Isaiah; and yet they will admire Chrysologus; in whom, (notwithstanding his fine name,) there is little to be found besides abundance of evangelical piety couched under numberless quibbles, and low witticisms. In the east, the just way of speaking and writing was better preserved; and the Greek tongue continued for some time, almost in its ancient purity. St. Chrysostom spake it very well. His style, you know, is copious; but he did not study false ornaments. All his discourse tends to persuasion; he placed every thing with judgment; and was well acquainted with the holy scripture, and the manners of men. He entered into their hearts; and rendered things familiarly sensible to them. He had sublime and solid notions; and is sometimes very affecting. Upon the whole, we must own he is a great orator.*

* What are you doing, wicked wretch? You require an oath on the holy table; and you sacrifice cruelly your brother on the same altar where Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself for you, lies? Thieves assassinate, but then they do it in secret; but you, in presence of the church, our common parent, murder

St. Gregory Nazianzen is more concise, and more poetical; but not quite so persuasive. And yet he has several moving passages; particularly in his funeral oration upon his brother St. Basil; and in his last discourse at taking leave of Constantinople. St. Basil is grave, sententious, and rigid, even in his style. He had meditated profoundly on all the truths of the gospel; he knew exactly all the disorders and weaknesses of human nature; and he had a great sagacity in the conduct of souls. There is nothing more eloquent than his epistle to a virgin that had fallen; in my opinion it is a masterpiece. But now if a preacher should not have formed his taste in these matters before he studies the fathers, he will be in danger of copying the most unaccurate parts of their works; and may perhaps imitate their chief defects in the sermons he composes.

one of her children, in which you are more wicked than Cain; for he concealed his guilt in the desert, and only deprived his brother of a transitory life; but you plunge your neighbour into everlasting death, and that in the midst of the temple, and before the face of the Creator! Was then the Lord's house built for swearing, and not for prayer? Is the sacred altar to occasion the committing of crimes, instead of expiating them? But if every other religious sentiment is extinguished in you, revere, at least, the holy book, with which you present your brother to swear upon. Open the holy gospel, on which you are going to make him swear, and upon hearing what Christ Jesus says of swearing, tremble and withdraw. And what does Christ say there? "It has been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself. . . . But I say unto you, swear not at all." How! you make people swear on that very book which forbids the taking of oaths! Impious procedure! Horrid sacrilege! This is making the legislator, who condemns murder, an accomplice in the guilt of it.

I shed fewer tears when I hear that a person has been murdered on the highway, than when I see a man go up to the altar, lay his hand on the holy book of the gospels, and take his oath aloud. On this occasion, it is impossible for me to keep from changing colour, from trembling, and shivering, both for him who administers, and for him who takes the oath. Miserable wretch! to secure to thyself a doubtful sum of money, thou losest thy soul! Can the benefit thou reapest, be put in competition with thine and thy brother's loss? If thou knowest, that he from whom thou exactest an oath is a good man, why then art thou not contented with his word? But if he is not, why dost thou force him to forswear himself? *Chrysostom against oaths. Homil.* xv. *ad Pop. Antioch.*

C. But how long continued this false eloquence which succeeded the true kind?

A. Till now.

C. What do you mean? Till now?

A. Yes, till now: for we have not yet corrected our taste of eloquence, so much as we imagine. You will soon perceive the reason of it. The barbarous nations that overran the Roman empire, did spread ignorance and a bad taste every where. Now we descended from them. And though learning began to revive in the fifteenth century; it recovered then but slowly. It was with great difficulty that we were brought by degrees to have any relish of a right manner: and even now, how many are there who have no notion of it? However, we ought to show a due respect not only to the fathers but to other pious authors, who wrote during this long interval of ignorance. From them we learn the traditions of their time, and several other useful instructions. I am quite ashamed of giving my judgment so freely on this point: but, gentlemen, ye desired me. And I shall be very ready to own my mistakes if any one will undeceive me. But it is time to put an end to this conversation.

C. We cannot part with you till you give us your opinion about the manner of choosing a text.

A. You know very well that the use of texts arose from the ancient custom that preachers observed, in not delivering their own reflections to the people; but only explaining the words of the sacred text. However by degrees they came to leave off this way of expounding the whole words of the gospel that was appointed for the day; and discoursed only upon one part of it, which they called the text of the sermon. Now if a preacher

does not make an exact explication of the whole gospel, or epistle, he ought at least to choose those words that are most important; and best suited to the wants and capacities of the people. He ought to explain them well; and to give a right notion of what is meant by a single word, it is oft times necessary to expound many others in the context. But there should be nothing refined or far fetched in such instructions. It must look very strange and awkward in a preacher to set up for wit and delicacy of invention, when he ought to speak with the utmost seriousness and gravity; out of regard to the authority of the Holy Spirit, whose words he borrows.

C. I must confess I always disliked a forced text. Have you not observed that a preacher draws from a text, whatever sermon he pleases? He insensibly warps and bends his subject to make the text fit the sermon that he has occasion to preach. This is frequently done in the time of Lent. I cannot approve of it.

B. Before we conclude, I must beg of you to satisfy me as to one point that still puzzles me, and after that we will let you go.

A. Come, then; let us hear what it is. I have a great mind to satisfy you if I can. For I heartily wish you would employ your parts in making plain and persuasive sermons.

B. You would have a preacher explain the holy scriptures with connexion, according to the obvious sense of them.

A. Yes; that would be an excellent method.

B. Whence then did it proceed that the fathers interpreted the scripture quite otherwise? They usually give a spiritual, and allegorical meaning to the sacred

text. Read St. Austin, St. Ambrose, St. Jerom, Origen, and others of the fathers: they find mysteries every where, and seldom regard the letter of the scripture.*

A. The Jews that lived in our Saviour's days abounded in these mysterious allegorical interpretations. It seems that the Therapeutæ who lived chiefly at Alexandria, (and whom Philo reckoned to be philosophical Jews, though Eusebius supposes they were primitive Christians,) were extremely addicted to these mystical interpretations. And indeed it was in the city of Alexandria that allegories began to appear with credit among Christians. Origen was the first of the fathers who forsook the literal sense of scripture. You know what disturbance he occasioned in the church. Piety itself seemed to recommend these allegorical interpretations. And besides there is something in them very agreeable, ingenious, and edifying. Most of the fathers, to gratify the humour of the people (and probably their own too) made great use of them. But they kept faithfully to the literal, and the prophetical sense (which in its kind is literal too) in all points where they had occasion to show the foundations of the christian doctrine. When the people were fully instructed in every thing they could learn from the letter of scripture; the fathers gave them those mystical interpretations to edify and comfort them. These explications were exactly adapted to the relish of the eastern people, among whom they first arose: for, they are naturally fond of mysterious and allegorical language. They were the more delighted with this variety of interpretations, because of the frequent preaching, and almost constant reading of scripture, which was used in the church. But

* See note A. at the end of the extract from Fenelon's Letter to the French Academy.

among us the people are far less instructed; we must do what is most necessary; and begin with the literal sense; without despising the pious explications that the fathers gave. We must take care of providing our daily bread; before we seek after delicacies. In interpreting scripture we cannot do better that to imitate the solidity of St. Chrysostom. Most of our modern preachers do not study allegorical meanings, because they have sufficiently explained the literal sense; but they forsake it, because they do not perceive its grandeur; and reckon it dry and barren in comparison of their way of preaching. But we have all the truths and duties of religion in the letter of the scripture, delivered not only with authority, and a singular beauty, but with an inexhaustible variety; so that without having recourse to mystical interpretations, a preacher may always have a great number of new and noble things to say. It is a deplorable thing to see how much this sacred treasure is neglected even by those who have it always in their hands. If the clergy applied themselves to the ancient way of making homilies, we should then have two different sorts of preachers. They who have no vivacity, or a poetical genius, would explain the scriptures clearly, without imitating its lively, noble manner; and if they expounded the word of God judiciously, and supported their doctrine by an exemplary life, they would be very good preachers. They would have what St. Ambrose requires, a chaste, simple, clear style, full of weight and gravity; without affecting elegance, or despising the smoothness and graces of language. The other sort, having a poetical turn of mind would explain the scripture in its own style and figures; and by that means become accomplished preachers. One sort would instruct people with clear-

ness, force, and dignity; and the other would add to this powerful instruction, the sublimity, the enthusiasm,* and vehemence of scripture; so that it would (if I may so say) be entire, and living in them, as much as it can be in men who are not miraculously inspired from above.

B. Oh, Sir; I had almost forgot an important article. Have a moment's patience, I beseech you; a few words will satisfy me.

A. What now? Have you any body else to censure?

B. Yes; the panegyrists. Do you think that when they praise a saint, they ought so to give his character, as to reduce all his actions and all his virtues to one point?

A. That shows the orator's invention and refined sense.

B. I understand you. It seems you do not like that method.

* Inspiration may be justly called *divine enthusiasm*—for inspiration is a *real* feeling of the *divine presence;* and enthusiasm a false one. *Characteristics, Vol.* i. *p.* 53.

This is what our author advances, when in behalf of *enthusiasm* he quotes its formal enemies, and shows that they are as capable of it as its greatest confessors and martyrs. So far is he from degrading *enthusiasm*, or disclaiming it in himself, that he looks upon this passion, simply considered, as the most natural; and its object, the justest in the world. Even *virtue* itself he takes to be no other than a noble enthusiasm, justly directed and regulated by that high standard which he supposes in the nature of things—nor is thorough *honesty*, in his hypothesis, any other than this zeal, or passion, moving strongly upon the species, or view of the decorum and sublime of actions. Others may pursue different forms, and fix their eye on different species, (as all men do on one or other;) the real *honest man*, however plain or simple he appears, has that highest species [the *honestum*, *pulchrum*, *το καλον πρεπον*] honesty itself in view; and, instead of outward forms or symmetries, is struck with that of inward character, the harmony, and numbers of the heart, and beauty of the affections, which form the manners, and conduct of a truly social life—upon the whole therefore, according to our author, *enthusiasm* is in itself, a very natural, *honest* passion, and has properly nothing for its object but what is *good* and *honest.*

Char. Vol. iii. *Miscel.* 2. *ch.* 1.

A. I think it wrong in most cases. He must put a force upon things, who reduces them all to a single point. There are many actions of one's life that flow from divers principles, and plainly show that he possessed very different qualities. The way of referring all the steps of a man's conduct to one cause, is but a scholastic subtilty, which shows that the orator is far from knowing human nature. The true way to draw a just character, is to paint the whole man, and to set him before the hearer's eyes, speaking and acting. In describing the course of his life, the preacher should chiefly point out those passages wherein either his natural temper, or his piety best appeared. But there should always be something left to the hearer's own observation. The best way of praising holy persons is to recount their laudable actions. This gives a body and force to a panegyric: this is what instructs people; and makes an impression upon their minds. But it frequently happens that they return home without knowing any thing of a person's life, about whom they have heard an hour's discourse: or at least they have heard many remarks upon a few separate facts, related without any connexion. On the contrary a preacher ought to paint a person to the life; and show what he was in every period, in every condition, and in the most remarkable junctures of his life. This could not hinder one from forming a character of him: nay, it might be better collected from his actions, and his words, than from general thoughts, and imaginary designs.

B. You would choose then to give the history of a holy person's life, and not make a panegyric.

A. No; you mistake me. I would not make a simple narration. I should think it enough to give a coherent view of the chief facts in a concise, lively, close, pa-

thetic manner. Every thing should help to give a just idea of the holy person I praised; and at the same time to give proper instruction to the hearers. To this I would add such moral reflections, as I should think most suitable. Now do not you think that such a discourse as this would have a noble and amiable simplicity? Do not you believe that the lives of holy people would be better understood this way, and an audience be more edified than they generally are? Do you not think that according to the rules of eloquence we laid down, such a discourse would even be more eloquent than those overstrained panegyrics that are commonly made?

B. I am of opinion that such sermons as you speak of would be as instructive, as affecting, and as agreeable as any other. I am now satisfied, Sir; it is time to release you. I hope the pains you have taken with me will not be lost; for I have resolved to part with all my modern collections, and Italian wits; and in a serious manner to study the whole connexion and principles of religion; by tracing them back to their source.

C. Farewell, Sir; the best acknowledgment I can make, is to assure you that I will have a great regard to what you have said.

A. Gentlemen, good night. I will leave you with these words of St. Jerom to Nepotian: 'when you teach in the church, do not endeavour to draw applause, but rather sighs and groans from the people; let their tears praise you.* The discourses of a clergyman should be full of the holy scripture. Be not a declaimer, but a true teacher of the mysteries of God.'

* "When you observe a hearer in silence, not uttering a word, but sorrowful, dejected, thoughtful, and in this condition returning straight home, and by his conduct, displaying the fruits of preaching; you ought to make more account of such a one, than of him who crowns the preacher with praise and applause." *Osterwald's Lect.* vi.

EXTRACT

FROM

THE LETTER OF M. FENELON

TO THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

RHETORIC has no such influence among us, as it had among the ancients. Public assemblies meet only for shows and ceremonies. We have scarce any remains of a powerful eloquence, either of our old parliaments, or our general states, or our assemblies of chief persons. Every thing is determined secretly in cabinet-councils, or in some particular negociation; so that our people have no encouragement to use such application as the Greeks did, to raise themselves by the art of persuasion. The public use of eloquence is now almost confined to the pulpit and the bar.

The warmth of our lawyers to gain a cause relating to the estate of a private person, cannot equal the ambition which the Greek orators had to possess themselves of the supreme authority in a commonwealth. A lawyer loses nothing; nay, he gets his fee, though he loose the cause he undertook. Is he young? he applies himself to plead elegantly, that he may acquire some reputation, without having ever studied either the grounds of the law, or the great models of antiquity. Has he established his character? he leaves off pleading, and enriches himself by chamber-practice. The most valuable lawyers are those who set facts in a clear light; who recur to some fixed principle of law; and

answer all objections according to it. But where are those who have the art of forcing the assent, and moving the hearts of a whole people?

Shall I presume to speak with the same freedom concerning preachers; God knows how much I reverence the ministers of his word. But I cannot offend any particular person among them, by observing in general, that they are not all equally humble and disinterested. Young men, who have little reputation, are too forward in preaching. People fancy they see that those seek their own glory more than God's; and that they are more earnest about making their fortune, than for the salvation of souls.

They talk like sparkling orators, rather than like ministers of Christ, and stewards of his mysteries. It was not with this vain pomp of words that St. Peter preached the crucified Jesus, in those sermons which converted so many thousand people.

Would we learn the rules of a serious, effectual eloquence from St. Austin? He follows Cicero in distinguishing three different kinds of speaking. He says we must speak submissively, in a humble, familiar way; mildly, in an engaging, soft, insinuating manner, to make people love the truth: and nobly, that is, in a lofty, vehement strain, when we would captivate men, and rescue them from the dominion of their passions. He adds, that the only reason for using such expressions as may please people, is because there are few men reasonable enough to relish such truths in a discourse as are quite dry and naked. As for the sublime and vehement kind, he would not have it florid; "nor embellished with the ornaments of speech; but rather full of the

most pathetic emotions.* For the speaker, following the impulse of his thoughts, does not industriously study the beauties of elocution; but naturally uses such as rise from the subject itself." The same father observes, that a man who fights resolutely with a sword, enriched with gold and jewels, uses these arms, (without regarding the value of them,) because they are fit for fighting. He adds, that God had permitted St. Cyprian to use some affected ornaments in his letter to Donatus, that posterity might see how much the purity of the Christian doctrine had corrected this superfluous vanity, and brought him to a more grave and modest eloquence.

But nothing can be more affecting than the two stories that St. Austin relates to show us the true way of preaching with success. In the first instance, he was as yet but a priest. The holy bishop Valerius appointed him to preach to the people of Hippo, in order to reclaim them from riotous feasting on solemn days.† He opened the scriptures, and read to them the most vehement and threatening reproaches. He earnestly besought his hearers, 'by the ignominies and the sorrows, by the cross, by the blood of Christ, not to destroy themselves; to pity him who spake to them with so much affection: and to show some regard to their venerable old bishop, who, out of tenderness to them, had commanded him to instruct them in the truth. I did not make them weep, (says he,) by first weeping over them: but while I preached, their tears prevented mine. I own that then I could not restrain myself. After we had wept

* Non tam verborum ornatibus comtum est, quam violentum animi affectibus —fertur quippe impetu suo, et elocutionis pulchritudinem, si occurrerit, vi rerum rapit, non cura decoris assumit.—Aug. *de Doct. Chr. L.* iv.

† *Epist.* xxix. *ad Alyp.*

together, I began to entertain great hope of their amendment.' On this occasion he quite varied from the discourse he had prepared; because he did not now think it suitable to their penitent disposition. In fine, he had the satisfaction of seeing this people tractable, and reformed from that very day.

The other occasion, wherein he powerfully swayed the minds of his audience, is thus related by himself: 'we must not imagine that a man has spoken in a lofty, sublime manner, when he receives many acclamations, and great applause. These are sometimes given to the lowest turns of wit, and the ornaments of the moderate sort of eloquence. But the sublime strain ofttimes overwhelms people's minds with its vehemence: it renders them speechless: it melts them into tears. When I endeavoured to persuade the people of Cæsarea in Mauritania to abolish a combat among the citizens, in which relations, brothers, fathers, and sons, being divided into two parties, fought publicly for several days, at a certain time of the year; and every man endeavoured to kill the person he attacked: according to the utmost of my ability, I used the most pathetic expressions to extirpate such a cruel, inveterate custom from the minds and manners of this people. However, I thought I had done nothing, while I only heard their acclamations. But their tears gave me some hope: their applauses showed that I had instructed them; and that they were pleased with my discourse: but their tears declared that their minds were changed. When I saw them weep, I believed that this horrible custom they had received from their ancestors, and been so long enslaved to, would be abolished—it is now eight years ago, and upwards, and by the grace of God they have been restrained from at-

tempting any such practice.' If St. Austin had weakened his discourse by the affected ornaments of the florid kind of rhetoric, he would never have been able to reform the people of Hippo and Caesarea.

Demosthenes likewise followed this rule of true eloquence. 'O Athenians! (said he) do not fancy that Philip is like a deity, assured of succees in all his attempts. Among those who seem devoted to his interest, there are some that hate, and dread, and envy him—but your negligence and sloth puts all things to a stand.—Consider, O Athenians, to what condition ye are reduced. This wicked man is gone so far as to leave you no choice between vigilance and inactivity. They say he threatens you; and talks arrogantly. He is not content now with what he has already conquered: he forms new projects every day; and lays snares for you on all sides, while you continue still backward and slothful. When then, O Athenians! when is it that ye will do what ye ought to do? when will ye attempt something? when will necessity determine you to act? what must we think of what is now a-doing? in my opinion, no necessity can be more urgent upon a free people than what arises from the shame of their past ill conduct. Will ye still wander about in public places, inquiring after news? what stranger news can there be, than that a man of Macedon subdues the Athenians, and governs all Greece? is Philip dead? says one: no, says another, he is only sick. what avails it, which he is? for if he were dead, you would soon raise up another Philip.' Here good sense speaks without any other ornament than its native force. The orator makes the truth plain to all the people: he awakens them: he spurs them on to action: he shows them their impending ruin. Every thing is spoken for

the common good; not a word to show his own wit: there is no glittering thought: all tends to instruct, and move the people.

Indeed the Romans began very late to follow the example of the Greeks, in improving polite learning.

> Graiis ingenium, Graiis dedit ore rotundo
> Musa loqui, praeter laudem nullius avaris.
> Romani pueri longis rationibus assem
> Discunt in partes centum deducere———

Hor. de Ar. Poet, v. 323.

The Romans were employed about their laws and rights; about war, and husbandry, and commerce: which gave Virgil occasion to say,

> Excudent alii spirantia mollius aera;
> Credo equidem; vivos ducent de marmore vultus,
> Orabunt causas melius;—
>
> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento;
> Hae tibi erunt artes;—

Aen. vi. v. 848.

Sallust finely describes the manners of antient Rome; even while he owns that she neglected literature. 'The most prudent (says he) were always the busiest. No one exercised his wit more than his body. The worthiest persons chose rather to act wisely, than to declaim: and to have their brave deeds applauded by others; rather than to bury themselves in recording their neighbour's good actions.'

We must acknowledge, however, according to Livy's testimony, that a strong and popular eloquence was well cultivated at Rome in the days of Manlius. This man, who had saved the capitol from the Gauls, tried to stir up the people to sedition. "How long," said he, "will

ye be ignorant of your strength; which nature discovers to the very beasts? Count at least how many ye are—I should think ye would fight more resolutely for liberty, than those men for dominion.—How long will ye look upon me? Ye may all of you depend on me to the utmost," &c. This powerful orator persuaded all the people to pardon him, stretching out his hands towards the capitol, which he had formerly saved. Nor could his death be obtained of the multitude, till he was carried into a sacred wood; whence he could no longer show them the capitol. "The Tribunes found," says Livy, "that seeing the people's minds were so strongly prepossessed with the merit of Manlius, it would be impossible to persuade them he was really guilty, unless they could carry them out of the sight of the capitol, which reminded them of his glorious service. Then his crime appeared."

Every one knows what troubles eloquence occasioned among the Greeks. At Rome, Cataline's oratory brought the republic to the brink of ruin. But that eloquence tended only to persuade people and to move their passions. Wit was never employed in it. A florid declaimer could have had no influence in public affairs.

Nothing can be more artless than Brutus, when he writes to Cicero with such an air of superiority, as to reprove and silence him. "You beg our life and safety of Octavius," says he; "what death could be so bad? By this request you show that tyranny is not destroyed; and that we have only changed our tyrant. Consider your own words; and deny if you can, that such a petition is fit to be offered to none but a king; and from a slave too. You say, that you ask and expect only one favour of him; that

he would save the lives of those citizens who are esteemed by persons of worth, and by all the Roman people. What, then, unless he shall graciously please, we must not live! But it is better to die than to owe our lives to him. No: I cannot think the gods are such declared enemies to the safety of Rome, as to be willing that the life of any citizens should be begged of Octavius; and far less the lives of those who are the deliverers of the universe. O Cicero! can you confess that he has such power! and still be one of his friends? Or if you love me, can you desire to see me at Rome, when I cannot come thither without obtaining that boy's permission? For what do you thank him, if you think that our life must still be begged of him as a favour? Must we reckon it a happiness that he chooses to have such favours asked rather of him, than of Antony?—This weakness and despair, which others are guilty of as well as you, first emboldened Cæsar to make himself king.—But if we remembered that we are Romans, the ambition of these base men to usurp the government, would not have been greater than our courage in defending it. I am afraid that you, who have been consul, and avenged the public of so many crimes, have thereby only delayed our ruin for a short while. How can you behold what you have done?" How weak, indecent, and mean, must this discourse have appeared, if it had been filled with witticisms and quaint conceits!

But now, shall those, who ought to speak like apostles, gather up, with industrious affectation, those flowers of rhetoric which Demosthenes, Manlius, and Brutus, trampled on? Shall we imagine that the ministers of the gospel have less concern for the eternal salvation of souls, than Demosthenes for the liberty of his coun-

try; less zeal to do good, than Manlius had ambition to seduce the multitude; or less resolution than Brutus, who chose death rather than to owe his life to a tyrant?

I own, that the florid kind of eloquence has its beauties: but they are quite misapplyed in those discourses that ought to be animated with the noblest passions; and wherein there is no room for delicate turns of wit. The florid sort of rhetoric can never come up to the true sublime. What would the antients have said of a tragedy, wherein Hecuba laments her misfortunes with points of wit. True grief does not talk thus. Or what could we think of a preacher who should, in the most affected jingle of words, show sinners the divine judgment hanging over their head, and hell open under their feet? there is a decency to be observed in our language, as in our clothes.* A disconsolate widow does not mourn in fringes, ribbons, and embroidery. And an apostolical minister ought not to preach the word of God in a pompous style, full of affected ornaments. The Pagans would not have endured to see even a comedy so ill acted.

> Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adflent
> Humani vultus. Si vis me flere, dolendum est
> Primum ipsi tibi; tunc tua me infortunia laedent,
> Telephe, vel Peleu; male si mandata loqueris,
> Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo; tristia moestum
> Vultum verba decent———
>
> *Hor. de Ar. Poet.* v. 101.

We must not judge so unfavourably of eloquence as to reckon it only a frivolous art that a declaimer uses to

* Nunc quid aptum sit, hoc est, quid maxime deceat in oratione, videamus; quamquam id quidem perspicuum est, non omni causae, nec auditori, neque personae, neque tempori congruere orationis unum genus—omnique in re posse quod deceat facere, artis et naturae est; scire, quid, quandoque deceat, prudentiae.

Cicero de Orat. lib. iii. § 55.

impose upon the weak imagination of the multitude, and to serve his own ends. It is a very serious art; designed to instruct people; suppress their passions; and reform their manners; to support the laws; direct public councils; and to make men good and happy. The more pains an haranguer takes to dazzle me, by the artifices of his discourse, the more I should despise his vanity. His eagerness to display his wit would in my judgment render him unworthy of the least admiration. I love a serious preacher, who speaks for my sake; and not for his own; who seeks my salvation, and not his own vain-glory. He best deserves to be heard, who uses speech only to clothe his thoughts; and his thoughts only to promote truth and virtue. Nothing is more despicable than a professed declaimer, who retails his discourses as a quack does his medicines.

I am willing this point should be determined by the very heathens. Plato would not permit in his republic such effeminate notes of music as the Lydians used. The Lacedemonians excluded from theirs all instruments that were too compounded; lest they should soften the people's temper. Such harmony as serves merely to please the ear, is an amusement fit only for soft and idle persons; and is unworthy of a well-ordered commonwealth. It is no farther valuable than the sounds agree to the sense of the words; and the words inspire virtuous sentiments. Painting, sculpture, and other elegant arts, ought to have the same end. This ought undoubtedly to be the design of eloquence too. Pleasure ought to be mixed with it only to serve as a counterpoise to men's vicious passions; and to render virtue amiable.

I would have an orator prepare himself a long time by general study, to acquire a large stock of knowledge;

and to qualify himself for composing well; that so he might need the less preparation fer each particular discourse. I would have him naturally a man of good sense; and to reduce all he says to good sense,* as the standard of his discourse. His studies should be solid; he should apply himself to reason justly; and industriously avoid all subtile and over-refined notions. He should distrust his imagination; and not let it influence his judgment. He should ground every discourse upon some evident principle; and from that draw the most obvious and natural consequences.

> Scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons;
> Rem tibi Socraticae poterunt ostendere chartae;
> Verbaque provisam rem non invita sequentur.
> Qui didicit patriae, quid debeat, et quid amicis,
> Quo sit amore parens, quo frater amandus et hospes;
> ——————————ille profecto
> Reddere personae scit convenientia cuique.
>
> *Hor. de Ar. Poet.* v. 309.

Generally speaking, a florid declaimer knows neither the principles of sound philosophy, nor those of the christian doctrine, for perfecting the manners of men. He minds nothing but bright expressions, and ingenious turns. What he chiefly wants is solid knowledge. He can talk handsomely, without knowing what he ought to say. He weakens the most important truths by his vain and elaborate turns of fancy, or expression.

On the contrary, the true orator adorns his discourse

* Caeterarum artium studia fere reconditis, atque abditis e fontibus hauriuntur; dicendi autem omnis ratio in medio posita, communi quodam in usu, atque in hominum more et sermone versatur; ut in caeteris id maxime excellat, quod longissime sit ab imperitorum intelligentia sensuque disjunctum; in dicendo autem vitium vel maximum est, a vulgari genere orationis, atque a consuetudine communis sensus abhorrere. *Cicero de Orat. lib.* i. § 3.

only with bright truths,* noble sentiments, and such strong expressions as are adapted to his subject, and to the passions he would excite. He thinks; he feels; and his words naturally flow from him. 'He does not depend on words, (says St. Austin,) but they on him.' A man that has a great and active soul, with a natural easiness of speech, improved by practice, needs never fear the want of expressions. His most ordinary discourses will have exquisite strokes of oratory that the florid haranguers can never imitate. He is not a slave to words,† but closely pursues the truth. He knows that vehemence is as it were the soul of eloquence. He first lays down the principle which must serve to clear the subject he treats of. He sets this principle in the fullest light. He turns it every way to give his slowest hearers a clear view of it. He draws the remotest consequences from it by a concise and obvious train of reasoning. Every truth is set in its proper place with regard to the whole; it prepares, leads on, and supports, another truth that needed its assistance. This just order prevents the trouble of needless repetitions; but it retrenches none of those useful ones, that serve to direct the hearer's attention frequently to that chief point on which the whole depends. The orator must often show him the conclusion that is contained in the principle, and from this principle, as from the centre, he must spread a due light over all the parts of the discourse; as a skilful painter places the light so in his picture, as from one single point to distribute a due proportion of it to every

* Sed ornatus (repetam enim) virilis, fortis et sanctus sit; nec effœminatam laevitatem, nec fuco eminentem colorem amet; sanguine et viribus niteat.
Quint. lib. viii. c. 3.

† Propterea non debet quisquam ubi maxima rerum momenta versantur, de verbis esse solicitus. *Quint. lib.* viii. c. 3.

figure. The whole discourse is one; and may be reduced to one single proposition, set in the strongest light, by various views and explications of it. This unity of design shows the whole performance at one view; as in the public places of a city, one may see all the streets and gates of it, when the streets are straight, equal, and duly proportioned. The discourse is the proposition unfolded; and the proposition is an abstract of the discourse.

> Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat et unum.
>
> *Hor. de Ar. Poet.* v. 23.

He, who perceives not the beauty and force of this unity and order, has never seen any thing in its full light. He has only seen shadows in Plato's cavern. What should we say of an architect, who could see no difference between a stately palace, whose apartments are adjusted with the exactest proportion, so as to make one uniform structure; and a confused heap of little buildings, which do not compose one regular plan, though they be all placed together? what comparison is there between the Colisaeum, and a confused multitude of irregular houses in a city? there can be no true unity in any composure, unless there can be nothing taken from it without spoiling it. It never has a right order but when we cannot displace any part without weakening, obscuring, and disordering the whole. This is what Horace explains perfectly well.

> —cui lecta potenter erit res
> Nec facundia deseret hunc, nec lucidus ordo.
> Ordinis haec virtus erit, et Venus, aut ego fallor
> Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
> Pleraque differat, et praesens in tempus omittat.
>
> *De Ar. Poet.*—

An author who does not thus methodize his discourse is not fully master of his subject: he has but an imper-

fect taste, and a low genius. Order indeed is an excellence we seldom meet with in the productions of the mind. A discourse is perfect when it has at once method, propriety, strength, and vehemence. But in order to this, the orator must have viewed, examined, and comprehended every point, that he may range each word in its proper place.* This is what an ignorant declaimer, who is guided by his imagination, can never discern.

Isocrates is smooth, insinuating, and elegant; but can we compare him to Homer? I will go farther; and am not afraid to say, that I think Demosthenes a greater orator than Cicero.† I protest there is no man admires Cicero more than I do. He embellishes every thing he handles. He is an honour to speech; and makes that happy use of words that no one else could. He has a vast variety of wit. He is even concise and vehement, when he designs to be so against Catiline, Verres, Anthony; but we may perceive some finery in his discourses. His art is wonderful, but still we discern

* It is an infallibe proof of the want of just integrity in every writing, from the epopeia, or heroic poem, down to the familiar epistle, or slightest essay either in verse or prose, if every several part or portion fits not its proper place so exactly, that the least transposition would be impracticable.—If there be any passage in the middle, or end, which might have stood in the beginning; or any in the beginning, which might have stood as well in the middle, or end; there is properly, in such a piece, neither beginning, middle, or end; it is a mere rhapsody, not a work. And the more it assumes the air or appearance of a real work, the more ridiculous it becomes. *Characteristics*, vol. iii. p. 259, 260.

† Quorum ego virtutes plerasque arbitror similes, consilium, ordinem dividendi, præparandi, probandi rationem; omnia denique, quæ sunt inventionis. In eloquendo est aliqua diversitas; densior ille, (Demosthenes;) hic (Cicero) copiosior; ille concludit adstrictius; hic latius pugnat; ille acumine semper; hic frequenter et pondere: illi nihil detrahi potest; huic nihil adjici; curæ plus in hoc; in illo naturæ.—Cedendum vero in hoc quidem, quod ille et prior fuit, et ex magna parte Ciceronem, quantus est, fecit. Nam mihi videtur M. Tullius, cum se totum ad imitationem Græcorum contulisset, effiinxisse vim Demosthenis, copiam Platonis, jucunditatem Isocratis.—Quint. lib. x. cap. 1.

it. While he is concerned for the safety of the republic, he does not forget that he is an orator; nor does he let others forget it. Demosthenes seems transported, and to have nothing in view but his country. He does not study what is beautiful, but naturally falls into it, without reflecting. He is above admiration. He uses speech, as a modest man does his clothes, only to cover himself. He thunders, he lightens; he is like a torrent that hurries every thing along with it. We cannot criticise him; for he is master of our passions. We consider the things he says, and not his words. We lose sight of him: we think of Philip only, who usurps every thing. I am charmed with these two orators; but I confess that Tully's prodigious art and magnificent eloquence effects me less than the vehement simplicity of Demosthenes.*

Art† lessens and exposes itself, when it is too open. Thus Longinus says, that "Isocrates blundered like a school boy, when he began one of his panegyrics in this manner;"—'Seeing such is the nature of eloquence, that it can make great things appear little, and small things to seem great; that it can represent the oldest things as new, and the newest as old.' —"Is it thus, O Isocrates!" one might say, "that you are going to change all things with regard to the Lacedemonians and the Athenians? By this manner of praising eloquence, he makes a preamble, to caution his hearers against believing any thing he should say." In effect, it was to declare to the world, that orators are only sophists, such as Plato's Gorgias was, and the other

* For a comparison between Cicero and Demosthenes, the reader may consult Rollin's *Belles Letters*, vol. ii. chap. 3. sect. 3.—Dr. Blair's *Lect.* vol. ii.—Mr. Hume's *Essays*, vol. i. essay 12.—Knox's *Essays*, vol. i. No. 44.

† Sed hoc pati non possumus, et perire artem putamus, nisi appareat; cum desinat ars esse, si apparet, *Quint. lib.* iv. cap. 2.

declaimers of Greece; who perverted rhetoric to impose on the people.

Since eloquence requires that an orator should be a man of probity, and be esteemed such, if he would expect success in the most common affairs of life; how much greater reason have we to believe this saying of St. Austin, concerning those who ought to speak like apostles? 'He preaches sublimely, whose life is irreproachable.'* What good can we expect from the discourses of a young man without solid knowledge, without experience, without an established character; who makes a diversion of oratory; and, perhaps, endeavours to raise his fortune by that ministry, which obliges us to be poor with Jesus Christ; to bear our cross with him, by self-denial; and to command men's passions in order to convert them?

* "With respect to preaching, the whole of it depends on piety. It is *that* which makes you seek out edifying subjects, and confine yourselves to such as are useful and necessary. *That* gives force and unction to your discourse, and makes you say affecting things. A pious man understands the human heart; piety is the source of true eloquence, which is natural, simple, and sublime."

OSTERVALD'S *Lect.* i.

NOTE A,

REFERRED TO ON PAGE 178.

The quaint and whimsical exposition of the scriptures, often introduced into sermons, especially when a metaphor belongs to the subject of discourse, is so inconsistent with the proper ends of preaching; that it seems desirable to place this fault in a distinct light, for the admonition of those, who are entering upon the duties of the sacred office.

The following pages are extracted from the Christian Observer, as containing a detailed specimen of this defect, which, in greater or smaller degrees of excess, is common in the pulpit.

A FEW days ago I heard a sermon preached at S—— church, by the Rev. Mr. B——, from Mark i. 17; "And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."

Mr. B—— observed, that Jesus Christ used to teach the people spiritual things, by means of sensible and familiar objects. In the present case, he spoke to fishermen, who understood well what fishing was: he therefore represented to them the nature of the Gospel ministry by means of this their trade. "In prosecution of this idea, I propose," said the preacher, "to show you three things: First, As the fish caught by these fishermen were taken out of the sea, so I shall show you what is that sea out of which those spiritual fish spoken of by Christ are taken; secondly, I shall show the manner of taking them; and thirdly, the effects of their being so taken. For as Christ made use of this metaphor, we may be sure that the metaphor is perfect, and that it must be a suitable one in all its parts.

"First, then, what is that sea out of which the spiritual fish are taken?—The sea is unquestionably the world; that world, I mean, which 'lieth in wickedness.' To prove this, let us mark some other passages of scripture.

"1. Does not the scripture say, 'That the wicked are like a troubled sea;' yea, that they are like a sea 'which casteth up mire and dirt?' Again, does not Job speak of the sea as containing things innumerable, both small and great?—and there is that great Leviathan, which hath his pastime therein. So the world contains people great and small, high and low; people various and innumerable. In another striking particular does the wicked world resemble the sea. In the sea the fishes, of which some are great and some are small, devour one another. They live by this means; for God has appointed it. And in this wicked world what a confusion is there! Confusion in families, confusion in cities, confusion in kingdoms! Turn your face now to France, turn it to Italy—what horrid wickedness and confusion is every where seen—how does one man or one party devour another! At one time the king of France is put to death by the people; then the people are overwhelmed by one faction and then by another, and so it is; confusion upon confusion, factions and individuals all destroying one another.

"Again, the wicked world is like the sea, inasmuch as the fishes in the sea, like the wicked men in the world, are all following their own natural propensities, and have no taste for any thing else. How do the youth run to the ball, and the play, and the card-table, and place all their delight therein! They have no taste for spiritual pleasures—no more than a fish has for any pleasures or employments out of the water.

"And this brings me to the second thing, which is to shew you what is the manner in which these spiritual fish are caught. But here, first, I would observe, that there is such a thing as unlawful nets; and so in the Gospel there is an unlawful net which some fishermen throw; I mean the net of mere morality. Morality never did, nor never can convert one poor sinner to God. From the creation of the world to the present hour, it never converted one; and why? Because it is not the Gospel. When men speak of the stupendous love of Christ, of his mercy and grace to sinners, of the guilt and wretchedness of man, and of a free salvation, then they throw the Gospel-net, and God will then bless his word, for he has promised that such fishermen as

these shall never labour in vain. They may be disappointed for a time. We may throw our net on one Sunday and catch no fish, and then throw it again on another Sunday; but on one day if not on another, some poor soul shall be converted to God by it. It is true, that angling is another way of catching fish; on which I must say, that they who preach mere morality are like fishermen who throw the bait into the water—a pleasing bait, which the fish are very eager after, but there is no hook to it. The spiritual fish are never caught in this way.

"What, then, is the way in which these spiritual fish are caught?—And first, I would say, that they are taken out of the water, and no more return to it. And so is the matter represented in Scripture, where it is said, that God hath *translated* us into the kingdom of his dear Son. He that is caught in the Gospel-net never returns to the world. He experiences a total change in conversion—as great a change as it would be for a fish to be taken out of the sea, and to have the nature of one of those animals given him, which live on dry land; for this would be a miracle, undoubtedly; and so conversions are miracles. Each individual conversion is as much a miracle as that would be, for it is wrought by the omnipotent power of God. And in this I apprehend consists the chief beauty of the present metaphor. It is that which seems to have been particularly intended by it.

"Again, when fish are caught, you know they always strive to get back again, though they cannot. So the sinner, when caught in the Gospel-net, struggles hard to get back into the sea; that is, into the world; but the omnipotent power of God keeps him out. Say, now, you that have been drawn out of the world by the grace of God, did you not struggle a while to return thither again?

"Again, there are nets of various sorts and sizes used in fishing; and so the Gospel-minister has various subjects by which he endeavours to draw his hearers—'We do not use the same net for sprats that we do for salmon.' Some ministers alarm the conscience by the terrors of the Lord, some melt and draw the sinner by the sweet mercies of the Gospel, &c. &c. I have of-

ten admired those passages in St. Paul, by which he endeavoured to win the hearts of his several hearers. And so we also have our different nets. We take one text on one day, and endeavour to catch you by it, and we take another text another day; and we handle the Gospel sometimes in one manner, and sometimes in a new and different manner; and thus it is, that different souls are caught.

"And now, thirdly, what is the effect or consequence of catching these spiritual fish? The first and chief consequence I would name is, that as a fish dies when taken out of the water, so are *they* dead to the things in which they once lived. Mark now that passage of the Apostle, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." They come into a new element; they have no taste for the pleasures of that element in which alone they could once live. What is the world's element? It is pleasure, riches, and so forth. But the converted person is dead to these.—And here let me call your attention to that particular passage of Scripture, in which Peter is employed in catching a fish, in whose mouth a piece of money was found. On this there is, I believe, a remark made by an old expositor, which will be of use to us in the present case. Peter threw in his hook at the command of Christ, and drew up the fish; and behold in its mouth was a piece of money! Now this money in the fish's mouth may shew how much money and wealth are apt to be in the mouth, and also in the heart, of the unconverted man, till the fisherman catches him and draws him out. But when the fish is drawn out of the water, then he drops the money out of his mouth; and what does he do with it? "He gives it to Peter,"—that is to say, he *commits* it to Peter, or some minister or steward of God, to be employed by him in deeds of mercy and loving-kindness to his brethren.

"Again, when the spiritual fish are caught, we may observe, that their next business is to catch others; 'when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.' One becomes a bait for another, &c.

"And now, my brethren," the preacher observed in conclusion, "may God grant that some of you may be converted to

God this night; or if not this night, may you at least be caught in the Gospel-net before the awful hour of death shall come. Think of that hour; how dreadful to the sinner! how happy to the saint! We set before you the Gospel-promises. If it were not for these, we should have no hope of gaining your soul. But it is because your bodies must die and moulder in the grave: it is because your souls must live for ever: it is because heaven is so glorious, and hell so dreadful, that we so earnestly address you. These are the baits by which we would allure you. But ye must be born again: ye cannot go to heaven without it. An unconverted man, if he was in heaven, would be more miserable than if he was in the lowest hell; for what pleasure would there be in heaven to him who has no heart to pray, to attend the preaching of the Gospel, and to hear the precious name of Christ sounded forth in his ears?"—He ended with praying that what had now been said might be the means of awakening and converting some present, and that Jesus Christ would send down his Spirit, that his name might be glorified, and their souls everlastingly saved.

In *justification* of the above sermon, it will probably be said by the favourers of this mode of preaching, and it may in part, perhaps, be said with truth—

1. That though faulty in some particulars, it contains much "Gospel-truth;" that the fundamental points of Christianity, viz. the fall and total corruption of man, the necessity of regeneration, salvation by free grace, and faith in Christ are either strongly asserted or clearly implied; and that to these, whenever clearly preached, though with much imperfection, God may be expected to give his blessing.

2. That this manner of preaching is also popular, being likely both to draw a congregation to church, and also to fix their attention when there, which is a great point; most ministers finding it very difficult to gain hearers, while this preacher's church is always remarkably full.

3. It will also perhaps be urged, that this gentleman's preaching has been found useful; many having been awakened and converted by it, and that the test of good and bad preaching is, generally speaking, the effect.

In *palliation* of the faults of it, it will probably be said—

1. That the preacher is a man of a lively, and perhaps too fanciful, turn of mind; that all men have their particularities; and that too strict criticism must not be applied to the sermons of every lively preacher; for whose sermons will bear this?

2. That although some texts of Scripture were strained by the preacher, and many inferences from the text pushed beyond our Saviour's intention, yet that every material thing stated in the course of the sermon was true, and proveable from other texts of Scripture, if not from his own text.

3. That many other good men besides Mr. B——, fall into the same way of too much spiritualizing a plain text; that, in particular, many a good old Puritan used to do so; and that the part of his sermon most liable to the objection of a critic seems to have been borrowed from some old Puritan or commentator of Scripture, who partook largely of this fault.

Having thus stated what may be said in favour of this mode of preaching, it will now be well to consider what are the objections to it.

1. And first, the use made of the words of the text (which were words spoken by our Saviour himself) *is clearly not the use which our Saviour intended that we should make of them.* The truth of this objection it seems hardly necessary to prove; for who can believe that our Saviour, in merely saying to these fishermen, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men," meant also to teach us that the world was like the sea, and also that it was like the sea because both fishes and men are in the habit of devouring one another, &c. &c. &c. The manner, indeed, in which Mr. B—— attempts to establish the resemblance, is a clear proof how ridiculous is the attempt. He quotes the following text, "The wicked are like the troubled sea, the waves whereof cast up mire and dirt:" that is to say, wicked *men* are like the troubled sea; but what he had asserted was that the *world* or *place* in which wicked men live was like the sea, not that wicked men themselves were. The wicked men themselves he had compared to fishes. Thus the introduction of the text from Isaiah only increases the confusion, not to mention how

ridiculous it would be to suppose a connexion between this passage of Isaiah and our Saviour's words in the text, even if they accorded. He next says, The sea is like the world, because as there are fishes of many sizes in the sea, so there are men of many degrees in the world. Equally, therefore, might it be said that the world is like the *air* because there are in it birds of many sizes; or like, in short, almost every thing in nature which consists of many parts; for what is there of which the many parts are not of many sizes?

The error as to the present point seems to be this: Mr. B—— says, that "the words of Christ in the text are a metaphor," and that "we may be sure that every metaphor used by Christ must be perfect and complete in all its parts." To which it is answered, that every metaphor is perfect and complete, if it perfectly and completely answers the purpose of giving the one simple impression intended by it.

"Alexander was a lion," is a metaphor which has been often used; and this is the common instance of a metaphor which is given in the most simple books on that subject. Does it then follow that they who have used that metaphor have intended to say that Alexander was like a lion in any thing else than in his fierceness and his courage? Is the metaphor imperfect unless Alexander can be also shown, in some ingenious way or other, to have four legs like a lion, and a long and flowing mane? So likewise it is not to be supposed, that because our Saviour by a metaphor called ministers fishers of men, he intended therefore that we should find out a resemblance between the world and the sea, between the act of drawing a fish out of the sea and the act of converting a sinner, and between the effects, which follow after catching a fish, and the effects which follow after converting a man. To attempt such a resemblance is not ingenious; it is ridiculous; and it tends, therefore, to render the gospel ridiculous.

Our Saviour was sober and serious, and not playful, when he used the expression in the text: he meant to speak seriously, and only generally and briefly, of the future occupation of the fishermen whom he was then calling to the ministry, and he did

not advert at all to the multitude of little circumstances which belong to fishing or belong to the Gospel-ministry; but Mr. B— has run a long parallel between fishing and preaching, &c. &c., and he has therefore done that which was never intended by Christ. And thus, while he has amused his hearers, he has sacrificed their edification; for perhaps hardly any thing is more hostile to edification than the little wit and humour and petty conceit of the pulpit.

> He that negociates between God and man,
> As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
> Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
> Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
> To court a grin when you should woo a soul;
> To break a jest, when pity would inspire
> Pathetic exhortation; and t' address
> The skittish fancy with facetious tales,
> When sent with God's commission to the heart!

2. Let us consider, a little more closely, some of *the serious mischiefs which result from this as well as from every other false and corrupt mode of treating Scripture.*—For the preacher to give to the people, in any respect, a false idea of the things intended by God to be taught by a text is certainly a serious evil. The Scriptures are Scriptures of truth: they should be reverenced as conveying truth. A truly serious mind is athirst to search out those truths they contain, and is anxious to have no human alterations or additions made to them. Such a one wishes to have a text of Scripture explained, applied to his conscience, and accommodated to present circumstances and present times, by fair and simple inference; but he wishes not to have any new, conceited, entertaining, or surprising meaning given to it: he desires only to have the pure word of God.

This anxiety to know the truth, which must be the characteristic of every serious mind, will be accompanied with much jealousy on the subject. Such a person will be afraid of being seduced out of the plain path of Scripture in order to gather flowers: he will keep close to Scripture in every respect. He will not be satisfied, therefore, with that apology for misinter-

preting a text which is so common; namely, that though the text is misinterpreted, yet their might be found other texts which would prove the point that is assumed. He reflects that this is an unsafe way of proceeding for one whose eternal interests are at stake; that a false interpreter of one text is but too likely to be a false interpreter of another; that interpretations must be watched in each case; and that one false interpretation is apt, in many instances, almost necessarily to beget another. Moreover, he considers that there are some false interpretations which indicate a false system of interpretation; such for instance, as the present; for the same person who thinks he must, by his ingenuity, discover certain coincidences in treating the present metaphor, which coincidences our Saviour never intended, will be likely to exercise a like sort of mischievous ingenuity in explaining every other metaphor and parable, and possibly almost every other passage in Scripture which he may chance to handle. Nay, there is great danger lest he should choose those texts to preach upon, the false and conceited interpretations of which he may find it most easy to deal in without being detected by his hearers. When this is the case, it will be the dark, the doubtful, and difficult texts that will be chiefly presented to a congregation; and the plainest, which are the most important, will be neglected as not affording scope for the ingenuity of the orator. How awful a case is this! How awful for the hearers on the one hand! How awful also for the preacher! The guilt of such a conduct in one, who is a steward of the mysteries of God, and who is required to be found faithful, and especially in one who professes to preach not himself but Christ Jesus the Lord, is what I will not attempt to estimate. It can only be estimated on the great judgment day. Every indulgence of a conceited taste, *leads, however, this way;* and this taste is one of the great corrupters of the oracles of God. Again—when this habit of false interpretation takes place, who shall say that the orthodoxy of the preacher is a sufficient security to his hearers; for does not orthodoxy, in its enlarged and most proper sense, consist in thinking rightly as to all the several parts of Scripture, as to practice as well as faith; and even if the faith in a few great

doctrines continues right, yet does not the liberty which men take with texts give great opportunity of destroying the due proportion and the just symmetry of Scripture? May not a favourite tenet be magnified beyond all bounds? May not apostles and prophets be represented by means of this ingenuity, as ever dwelling on the same point as the preacher? May not one class of texts be multiplied, and another class of texts diminished, just as much as if erasures and interpolations of Scripture were to take place? And is not a wo pronounced on the man who shall either add too, or take away from, the words of that book?

Again; if one man may interpret falsely for one purpose, why may not another man claim the same right for another? How is Scripture thus rendered a book of a thousand different and contrary meanings; and how may every point of orthodoxy be thus successfully attacked or undermined, by those who use only the same false system of interpretation in attacking it, which others use in defending it! How may error be thus promoted on every side! How may also differences of opinion be multiplied, and christian charity and unity destroyed! How may the several and contradictory whims of men become all sanctioned by its being pretended of them all that they make a part of the word of God! All this, I say, may be done by that free and general use of misapplied ingenuity and conceit, of which this sermon, throughout the chief parts of it, affords a license and an example.

There is, perhaps, no point in what is commonly called orthodoxy, which it is more necessary to guard, than our general system and habit of interpreting scripture. A preacher, whose general rules and habits of interpreting Scripture are false and incorrect, insensibly but most effectually communicates to his hearers the same habits which he has unhappily adopted. The hearer learns to misinterpret his own bible at home, to make it bend to his own prejudices, extravagances, and errors, and perhaps learns to look into it for little else than riddles and conceits, and not for plain and sober directions how he may walk so as to please God.

3. Another evil arising from a preacher's using this false in-

genuity in treating texts of Scripture is, *the disadvantage under which it places those more upright and more faithful ministers, whose consciences will not allow them to resort to the same art of pleasing a congregation.*—The true minister of the Gospel is undervalued; his explanations of Scripture seem flat and insipid; his spiritual knowledge and penetration into Scripture are thought inferior; his character is discredited; perhaps it is doubted whether he is a true minister of the Gospel; his church is thinned; in the mean time, the man of mere conceit is followed and is extolled for his spiritual light.

4. But the great evil of all is, *the mischief done to the souls of the persons who crowd to hear those entertaining harangues, which consist of sparkling conceits and misinterpretations of Scripture.*—There can be no doubt that the hearers mistake the pleasure they feel in partaking of the entertainment for the pleasure of hearing the Gospel. Man is a being extremely liable to be deceived by false associations of things. Is there a sermon preached which is half fanciful and ludicrous, and half evangelical and just? Hearers will flock to it for the sake of the fanciful part; will confound the whole together in their minds: and though in truth, they are only or chiefly entertained by the many fanciful passages they will confidently think that it is the evangelical part of the sermon which pleases them. It is thus that multitudes deceive their own souls; "for the heart of man is *deceitful* above all things, as well as desperately wicked." It seems to have been for this reason that Paul abstained from all meretricious ornaments, when he preached the Gospel of Christ. He was afraid lest his hearers, if he mixed his own fancifulness, or his own studied and affected oratory, with the pure word which he delivered, should follow him for the sake of this, and not for the sake of the Gospel. "I determined," therefore, said he, "not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, and my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom;" "for do I now please man, or God?"

It is material to apply this observation still more particularly to the present sermon. There is in it, undoubtedly, an occasional mention (and in a plain manner) of some leading truths of the

Gospel: and yet, if the manner of mentioning these is well considered; if the probable character of the audience is taken into contemplation; and if, likewise, the general drift of the sermon is weighed, it may then possibly be found that even those Gospel truths, stated as they were, and under all the circumstances of the case, were likely not only to be inefficient, but perhaps even worse than inefficient, in respect to no small part of the congregation.

The Gospel truths chiefly asserted were the total corruption of man, the necessity of conversion, of faith, and of the love of Christ, as well as the inefficacy of preaching morality;—all points of infinite importance, but which need to be taught, not by being briefly named only, or violently asserted, but by being fully and clearly explained, both as to their nature and effects.

Now it may be observed, that the common people, (of whom a large part of this congregation consisted,) generally like strong doctrine, and seldom take offence at its strength. We mean, that even they whose lives evince that they are not the better for it, seldom quarrel with the doctrine, if they are people of the lower class. The reasons of this are several:—One is, that the lower people are credulous, and apt to take upon trust any doctrine that is vehemently preached. Another is, that the common people reflect and reason little, and do not therefore easily perceive the holines of life and practice to which the doctrine binds them, nor even the manner in which a doctrine condemns themselves. A further reason of their loving strong doctrine is, that they love to be somewhat roughly dealt with, and to be even, in any way, strongly and vehemently impressed. The brief mention of two or three strong doctrines to an unlettered audience, is therefore both a means of being popular among them, and, if this brief and strong mention of it be all, is a means of doing but little good. In the present case, there is reason to fear, that the good and sound doctrine, for such there certainly is in it, may have been given only in such manner and quantity, as even to promote in many persons the self-delusion so much to be dreaded; for, in order successfully to introduce into any mixed congregation delusion and error, there must always be some mixture of truths. Had Mr. B——'s sermon consisted of nothing else

than an uninterrupted succession of mere conceits, few, or none, probably would have been misled by it; but the good Gospel sayings in it would make it pass.

It will, however, probably be replied to all that has been said, that such preaching as that of Mr. B—— has, in point of fact, been found very useful, very many persons having been converted by it. To this I answer, that it would not be enough to say that many had been converted by him; for the very point, which I have been labouring to prove, is, that the word *Conversion*, unless the clear nature of the thing be fully and at large explained, is a word extremely vague and delusive. Before we can admit the force of the observation, it must be therefore shown in detail *from* what, and *to* what, he has converted so many people. The fair presumption certainly is, that he has converted them to just his own way of interpreting Scripture, and to all his own tenets as far as they appear in his sermons. The mere circumstance of an *effect* being produced, is not to be allowed to be in itself material. The Pharisees of old produced an effect by their preaching; for it is observed in Scripture, that they made proselytes; but then the misfortune was, that their proselytes were ten times more the children of hell than before. The Socinians of this day make converts; but unhappily it is converts to Socinianism. Mr. Huntington has made many converts, but they are many of them converts to every tittle of his own extravagant and antimonian opinions. It is of the nature of every seed to produce after its own kind. To assume that because a man's preaching makes converts to his own opinions it is a conclusive proof of the goodness of the preacher, is therefore to beg the whole question. The probability in this case is, that since the hearers of Mr. B——— occasionally hear other preachers, the effect produced is the joint effect of the whole of the preaching which they hear. What may be defective in Mr. B———'s preaching, may partly be supplied by others, and the full evil of his system may for that reason not appear.

I might also have dwelt on the subject of the false taste and conceit of certain parts of this sermon, and particularly of one part of it, which seems to have been a quotation. Such ludi-

erous expositions of Scripture are well known to have marked the character of those persons who, in the time of Cromwell, most shamefully disgraced the profession of religion ; and are not unlikely to be considered by reflecting men as symptoms of a similar tendency among the zealous religionists of the present day. We have chosen, however, to attack this sermon chiefly in what appeared to be most fundamental, namely, on account of the ineffectual way in which Gospel doctrine is taught in it; on account of the room for self-flattery, which it affords to the bulk of hearers; and also on account of the unfair and unwarrantable mode in which the preacher attempts to catch attention, by a false system of interpreting Scripture. To borrow his own phrase, may it not be even questioned whether he himself, in this instance, may not be one of those persons, who have been fishing with an unlawful net, and casting among his hearers an agreeable bait, which, however, may have had no hook attached to it?

CLAUDE'S ESSAY

ON THE

COMPOSITION OF A SERMON.

ESSAY, &c.

CHAP. I.

ON THE CHOICE OF TEXTS.

THERE are in general *five* parts of a sermon, the exordium, the connexion, the division, the discussion, and the application: but, as connexion and division are parts which ought to be extremely short, we can properly reckon only *three* parts; exordium, discussion, and application. However, we will just take notice of connexion and division after we have spoken a little on the choice of texts, and on a few general rules of discussing them.*

* Bishop Wilkin says, "Preaching should have its rules and canons, whereby men may be directed to the easiest and readiest way for the practice of it. Besides all academical studies of languages, sciences, divinity, &c. besides all these, there is a particular *art of preaching*. Two abilities are requisite in every one; a right understanding of sound doctrine, and an ability to propound, confirm, and apply it to others. The first may be without the other; and, as a man may be a good *lawyer*, and yet not a good *pleader;* so he may be a good *divine*, and yet not a good *preacher*. One reason why men of eminent parts are so slow and unskilful herein, is, that they have not been versed in this study, and are therefore unacquainted with those proper rules and directions by which they should be guided in the attaining and exercise of this gift. It hath been the usual course at the university, to venture upon this calling in an abrupt, overhasty manner. When scholars have passed over their philosophical studies, and made some little entrance on divinity, they presently think themselves fit for the pulpit, without any father inquiry, as if the gift of preaching, and sacred oratory, was not a distinct art of itself. This would be counted very preposterous in other matters, if a man should presume on being an orator because he was a logician, or to practise physic because he had learned philosophy," &c.

Wilkin's Ecclesiastes.

1. *Never choose such texts as have not a complete sense;* for only impertinent and foolish people will attempt to preach from one or two words, which signify nothing.

2. Not only *words*, which have a complete sense of themselves must be taken, but they *must* also *include the complete sense of the writer*, whose words they are; for it is his language, and they are his sentiments, which you explain. For example, should you take these words of 2 Cor. i. 3. *Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort*, and stop here, you would conclude a complete sense; but it would not be the apostle's sense. Should you go farther, and add, *who comforteth us in all* our *tribulation*, it would not then be the complete sense of St. Paul, nor would his meaning be wholly taken in, unless you went on to the end of the fourth verse. When the complete sense of the sacred writer is taken, you may stop; for there are few texts in scripture, which do not afford matter sufficient for a sermon; and it is equally inconvenient to take too much text, or too little; both extremes must be avoided.

When *too little* text is taken, you must digress from the subject to find something to say; flourishes of wit and imagination must be displayed, which are not of the genius of the pulpit; and, in one word, it will make the hearers think, that self is more preached than Jesus Christ; and that the preacher aims rather at appearing a wit, than at instructing and edifying his people.

When *too much* text is taken, either many important considerations, which belong to the passage, must be left out, or a tedious prolixity must follow. A proper measure, therefore, must be chosen, and neither too little, nor too much matter taken. Some say, preaching is

designed only to make scripture understood, and therefore they take a great deal of text, and are content with giving the sense, and with making some principal reflections; but this is a mistake; for preaching is not only intended to give the sense of scripture, but also of theology in general; and, in short, to explain the whole of religion, which cannot be done, if too much matter be taken; so that, I think, the manner commonly used in our churches is the most reasonable, and the most comformable to the end of preaching. Every body can read scripture with notes and comments to obtain simply the sense; but we cannot instruct, solve difficulties, unfold mysteries, penetrate into the ways of divine wisdom, establish truth, refute error, comfort, correct, and censure, fill the hearers with an admiration of the wonderful works and ways of God, inflame their souls with zeal, powerfully incline them to piety and holiness, which are the ends of preaching, unless we go farther than barely enabling them to understand scripture.

3. To be more particular, regard must be paid to circumstances, times, places and persons, and texts must be chosen relative to them. *Times* are *ordinary* or *extraordinary*. *Ordinary* times are Lord's supper-days, new-year's day, &c. On these days particular texts should be chosen, which suit the service of the day; for it would discover great negligence to take texts on such days, which have no relation to them. It is not to be questioned but on these days peculiar efforts ought to be made, because then the hearers come with raised expectations, which, if not satisfied, turn into contempt, and a kind of indignation against the preacher.

Particular days not fixed, but *occasional*, are fast days, ordination days, days on which the flock must be

extraordinarily comforted, either on account of the falling out of some great scandal, the exercise of some great affliction, or the inflicting of some great censure. On fast-days, it is plain, particular texts must be expressly chosen for the purpose; but on other occasions it must rest on the preacher's judgment; for most texts may be used extraordinarily, to comfort, exhort, or censure; and, except the subject in hand be extremely important, the safest way is not to change the usual text. For ordination-days extraordinary texts and agreeable to the subject in hand must be taken, whether it regards the ordainer, or the ordained; for very often he, who is ordained in the morning, preaches in the afternoon.

I add one word touching sermons in strange churches. 1. Do not choose a *text which appears odd*, or the choice of which vanity may be supposed to dictate. 2. Do not choose *a text of censure;* for a stranger has no business to censure a congregation, which he does not inspect; unless he have a particular call to it, being either sent by a synod, or intreated by the church itself. In such a case the censure must be conducted with wisdom, and tempered with sweetness. Nor 3. Choose a *text leading to curious, knotty questions;* then it would be said, the man meant to preach himself. But 4. Choose a text of ordinary doctrine, in discussing which, doctrine and morality may be mixed, and rather let moral things be said by way of exhortation and consolation than by way of censure; nor that the vicious should not be censured; for reproof is *essential* to preaching; but it must be given soberly, and in general terms, when we are not with our own flocks.

CHAP. II.

GENERAL RULES OF SERMONS.

ALTHOUGH the following general rules are well known, yet they are too little practised: they ought, however, to be constantly regarded.

1. A sermon should *clearly* and purely *explain a text*, make the sense easy to be comprehended, and place things before the people's eyes, so that they may be understood without difficulty. This rule condemns embarrassment and *obscurity*, the most disagreeable thing in the world in a gospel pulpit. It ought to be remembered, that the greatest part of the hearers are simple people, whose profit, however, must be aimed at in preaching: but it is impossible to edify them, unless you be very clear. As to learned hearers, it is certain, they will always prefer a clear before an obscure sermon; for, first, they will consider the simple, nor will their benevolence be content if the illiterate be not edified; and next, they will be loth to be driven to the necessity of giving too great an attention, which they cannot avoid, if the preacher be obscure. The minds of men, whether learned or ignorant, generally avoid pain; and the learned have fatigue enough in the study, without increasing it at church.

2. A sermon must give *the entire sense of the whole* text, in order to which it must be considered in every view. This rule condemns *dry and barren explications*, wherein the preacher discovers neither study nor invention, and leaves unsaid a great number of beautiful things, with which his text would have furnished him. Preach-

ments of this kind are extremely disgustful; the mind is neither elevated, nor informed, nor is the heart at all moved. In matters of religion and piety, not to edify much, is to destroy much; and a sermon *cold* and *poor* will do more mischief in an hour, than a hundred rich sermons can do good. I do not mean, that a preacher should always use his utmost efforts, nor that he should always preach alike well; for that neither can nor ought to be. There are extraordinary occasions, for which all his vigour must be reserved. But I mean, that, in ordinary and usual sermons, a kind of plenitude should satisfy and content the hearers. The preacher must not always labour to carry the people beyond themselves, nor to ravish them into extacies: but he must always satisfy them, and maintain in them an esteem and an eagerness for practical piety.

3. The preacher must be *wise*, *sober*, *chaste*. I say *wise*, in opposition to those impertinent people, who utter jests, comical comparisons, quirks and extravagancies; and such are a great part of the preachers of the church of Rome. I say *sober*, in opposition to those rash spirits, who would penetrate all, and curiously dive into mysteries beyond the bounds of modesty. Such are those, who make no difficulty of delivering in the pulpit all the speculations of the schools, on the mystery of the trinity, the incarnation, the eternal reprobation of mankind; such as treat of questions beyond our knowledge; *viz.* What would have been if Adam had abode in innocence; what the state of souls after death; or what the resurrection; and our state of eternal glory in paradise. Such are they, who fill their sermons with the different interpretations of a term, or the different opinions of interpreters on any passage of scripture; who load their

hearers with tedious recitals of ancient history; or on account of the divers heresies which have troubled the church upon any matter; all these are contrary to the sobriety of which we speak, and which is one of the most excellent pulpit virtues. I say farther *chaste*, in opposition to those bold and impudent geniuses who are not ashamed of saying many things, which produce unclean ideas in the mind. Chastity should weigh the expressions, and make a judicious choice, in order to keep the hearers' minds at the greatest distance from all sorts of carnal and terrestrial ideas. The likeliest way of succeeding in these cases is to beware of pressing metaphorical terms too far; to adhere to general considerations, and if possible to explain the metaphorical terms in few words, and afterwards to cleave entirely to the thing itself.

4. A preacher must be *simple* and *grave*. *Simple*, speaking things full of good natural sense without metaphysical speculations; for none are more impertinent than they, who deliver in the pulpit abstract speculations, definitions in form, and scholastic questions, which they pretend to derive from their texts;—as, on the manner of the existence of angels; the means whereby they communicate their ideas to each other; the manner in which ideas eternally subsist in the divine understanding; with many more of the same class, all certainly opposite to simplicity. To simple I add *grave*, because all sorts of mean thoughts and expressions, all sorts of vulgar and proverbial sayings, ought to be avoided. The pulpit is the seat of good natural sense; and the good sense of good men. On the one hand then, you are not to philosophize too much, and refine your subject out of

sight; nor, on the other, to abase yourself to the language and thoughts of the dregs of the people.

5. The understanding must be informed, but in a manner, however, which *affects the heart;* either to comfort the hearers, or to excite them to acts of piety, repentance or holiness. There are two ways of doing this, one formal, in turning the subject to moral uses, and so applying it to the hearers; the other in the simple choice of the things spoken; for if they be good, solid, evangelic, and edifying of themselves, should no application be formally made, the auditors would make it themselves; because subjects of this kind are of such a nature, that they cannot enter the understanding without penetrating the heart. I do not blame the method of some preachers, who, when they have opened some point of doctrine, or made some important observation, immediately turn it into a brief moral application to the hearers; this Mr. Daillé frequently did: yet I think it should not be made a constant practice, because, 1st, what the hearer is used to, he will be prepared for, and so it will lose its effect; and 2dly, because you would thereby interrupt your explication, and consequently also the attention of the hearer, which is a great inconvenience. Nevertheless, when it is done but seldom, and seasonably, great advantage may be reaped.

6. One of the most important precepts for the discussion of a text, and the composition of a sermon, is, above all things, to avoid excess: *Ne quid nimis.*

1. There must not be too much *genius;* I mean, not too many brilliant, sparkling, and striking things; for they would produce very bad effects. The auditor will never fail to say, The man preaches himself, aims to display his genius, and is not animated by the spirit of

God, but by that of the world. Besides, the hearer would be overcharged; the mind of man has its bounds and measures, and as the eye is dazzled with too strong a light, so is the mind offended with the glare of too great an assemblage of beauties. Farther, it would destroy the principal end of preaching, which is to sanctify the conscience; for when the mind is overloaded with too many agreeable ideas, it has not leisure to reflect on the objects; and, without reflection, the heart is unaffected.

2. A sermon must not be *overcharged with doctrine*, because the hearers' memories cannot retain it all, and by aiming to keep all, they will lose all; and because you will be obliged either to be excessively tedious, or to propose the doctrine in a dry, barren, scholastic manner, which will deprive it of all its beauty and efficacy. A sermon should instruct, please and affect; that is, it should always do these as much as possible. As the doctrinal part, which is instructive, should always be proposed in an agreeable and *affecting* manner; so the agreeable parts should be proposed in an *instructive* manner; and even in the conclusion, which is designed wholly to affect, agreeableness must not be neglected, nor altogether instruction. Take care, then, not to charge your sermon with too much matter.

3. Care must also be taken *never to strain any particular part*, either in attempting to exhaust it, or to penetrate too far into it. If you aim at exhausting a subject, you will be obliged to heap up a number of common things without choice or discernment; if at penetrating, you cannot avoid falling into many curious questions, and unedifying subtilties; and frequently in attempting it you will distil the subject till it evaporates.

4. *Figures must not be overstrained.* This is done by stretching metaphor into allegory, or by carrying a parallel too far. A metaphor is changed into an allegory, when a number of things are heaped up, which agree to the subject, in keeping close to the metaphor. As in explaining this text, *God is a sun and a shield;* it would be stretching the metaphor into an allegory to make a great collection of what God is in himself; what to us; what he does in the understanding and conscience of the believer; what he operates on the wicked; what his absence causeth; and all these under terms, which had a perpetual relation to the *sun.* Allegories may be sometimes used very agreeably; but they must not be strained, that is, all, that can be said on them, must not be said. A parallel is run too far, when a great number of conformities between the figure, and the thing represented by the figure, are heaped together. This is almost the perpetual vice of mean and low preachers; for when they catch a figurative word, or a metaphor, as when God's word is called a *fire*, or a *sword;* or the church a *house*, or a *dove;* or Jesus Christ a *light*, a *sun*, a *vine*, or a *door;* they never fail making a long detail of conformities between the figures and the subjects themselves; and frequently say ridiculous things. This vice must be avoided, and you must be content to explain the metaphor in a few words, and to mark the principal agreements, in order afterward to cleave to the thing itself.

5. *Reasoning must not be carried too far.* This may be done many ways; either by long trains of reasons, composed of a quantity of propositions chained together, or principles and consequences; which way of reasoning is embarrassing and painful to the auditor; or by mak-

ing many branches of reasons, and establishing them one after another; which is tiresome and fatiguing to the mind. The mind of man loves to be conducted in a more smooth and easy way; all must not be proved at once; but, supposing principles, which are true and plain, and which you, when it is necessary, are capable of proving and supporting, you must be content with using them to prove what you have in hand. Yet I do not mean, that in reasoning, arguments should be so short and dry, and proposed in so brief a manner as to divest the truth of half its force, as many authors leave them. I only mean, that a due medium should be preserved; that is, that without fatiguing the mind and attention of the hearer, reasons should be placed in just as much force and clearness, as are necessary to produce the effect.

Reasoning also may be overstrained by heaping great numbers of proofs on the same subject. Numerous proofs are intolerable, except in a principal matter, which is like to be much questioned or controverted by the hearers. In such a case you would be obliged to treat the subject fully and *ex professo;* otherwise the hearers would consider your attempt to prove the matter as an useless digression. But when you are obliged to treat a subject fully, when that subject is very important, when it is doubted and controverted, then a great number of proofs are proper. In such a case you must propose to convince and bear down the opponent's judgment, by making truth triumph in many different manners. In such a case, many proofs associated together to produce one effect, are like many rays of light, which naturally strengthen each other, and which all together form a body of brightness, which is irresistible.

6. You must as much as possible abstain from *all sorts of observations foreign from theology.* In this class I place, 1. *Grammatical observations* of every kind, which not being within the people's knowledge can only weary and disgust them. They may nevertheless be used when they furnish an agreeable sense of the word, or open some important observation on the subject itself, provided it to be done very seldom and very pertinently.

2. *Critical observations* about different readings, different punctuations, &c. must be avoided. Make all the use you can of critical knowledge yourself; but spare the people the account, for it must needs be very disagreeable to them.

I add, 3dly. *Avoid philosophical and historical observations*, and all such as belong to *Rhetoric;* or, if you do use them, do not insist on them, and choose only those, which give either some light to the text, or heighten its pathos and beauty; all others must be rejected.

Lastly. I say the same of passages from *Profane Authors*, or *Rabbies*, or *Fathers*, with which many think they enrich their sermons. This farrago is only a vain ostentation of learning, and, very often they who fill their sermons with such quotations, know them only by relation of others. However, I would not blame a man who should use them discreetly. A quotation not common, and properly made, has a very good effect.

CHAP. III.

OF CONNEXION.

The connexion is the relation of your text to the foregoing or following verses. To find this, consider the scope of the discourse, and consult commentators; particularly exercise your own good sense; for commentators frequently trifle, and give forced and far-fetched connexions, all which ought to be avoided, for they are not natural, and sometimes good sense will discover the scope and design of a writer far better than this kind of writers.

There are texts, the connexions of which (I own) it will be sometimes difficult to perceive. In such a case endeavour to discover them by frequent and intense meditation, or take that, which commentators furnish; and among many, which they give, choose that, which appears most natural; and if you can find none likely, the best way will be to let the passage alone. The connexion is a part, which must be very little insisted on, because the hearers almost always pass it over, and receive but little instruction from it.

When the coherence will furnish any agreeable considerations for the illustration of the text, they must be put in the discussion; and this will very often happen. Sometimes also you may draw thence an exordium: in such a case the exordium and connexion will be confounded together.

CHAP. IV.

OF DIVISION.

Division, in general, ought to be restrained to a small number of parts: they should never exceed four or five at the most; the most admired sermons have only two or three parts.*

There are two sorts of divisions, which we may very properly make; the first, which is the most common, is the division of the *text* into its parts; the other is of the *discourse*, or sermon itself, which is made on the text.†

I. The *division of a discourse*, is proper, when, to give light to a text, it is necessary to mention many things, which the text supposes but does not formally express; and which must be collected elsewhere, in order to enable you to give in the end a just explication of the text. In such a case you may divide your *discourse* into two parts, the first containing some *general considerations* necessary for understanding the text; and the second the *particular explication* of the text itself.

1. This method is proper when a *prophecy of the Old Testament* is handled; for generally, the understanding of

* A proper method of division may be seen in the following specimen from Cicero.

Causa quæ sit videtis; nunc quid agendum sit considerate. *Primum* mihi videtur de genere belli; *deinde* de magnitudine; *tum* de imperatore deligendo esse dicendum. *Primum* bellum Asiaticum genere suo grave et necessarium esse. 1. Quia agitur gloria pop. Rom. 2. Quia agitur salus sociorum. 3. Quia aguntur vectigalia maxima. 4. Quia aguntur fortunæ multorum civium. . . . *Tertium* Pompeius est bonus imperator, quia in eo sunt *quatuor* virtutes, quæ bonum imperatorem commendant. 1. Scientia rei militaris. 2. Virtus. 3. Auctoritas. 4. Felicitas. *Pro lege Manilia.*

† These may be called *textual* and *topical.*

these prophecies depends on many general considerations, which, by exposing and refuting false senses, open a way to the true explication; as appears by what has been said on Gen. iii. 15; "I will put enmity between thee, and the woman; and between thy seed, and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;" and on the covenant made with Abraham, &c.*

2. This method is also proper on *a text taken from a dispute*, the understanding of which must depend on the state of the question, the hypotheses of adversaries, and the principles of the inspired writers. All these lights are previously necessary, and they can only be given by general considerations: For example, Rom. iii. 28. "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Some general considerations must precede, which clear up the *state of the question* between St. Paul and the Jews, touching justification; which mark *the hypothesis* of the Jews upon that subject, and which discover the *true principle*, which St. Paul would establish; so that in the end the text may be clearly understood.

3. This method also is proper in a *conclusion drawn from a long preceding discourse;* as for example, Rom. v. i. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Some think that, to manage this text well, we ought not to speak of *justification* by faith; but only of that *peace*, which we have with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I grant, we ought not to make justification the chief part of the sermon; but the text is a conclusion drawn by the apostle from the preceding discourse; and we shall deceive

* These general considerations appear better still in an *exordium*.

ourselves, if we imagine this dispute between St. Paul and the Jews so well known to the people, that it is needless to speak of it; they are not, in general, so well acquainted with scripture. The *discourse* then must be divided into two parts, the first consisting of some *general considerations* on the doctrine of justification, which St. Paul establishes in the preceding chapters; and the second, of his *conclusion*, *That*, being thus justified, *we have peace with God*, &c.

The same may be said of the first verse of the viii. of Romans, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them, that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" for it is a consequence drawn from what he had been establishing before.

4. The same method is proper for *texts*, which are *quoted* in the New Testament *from the Old*. You must prove by *general considerations*, that the text is properly produced, and then you may come clearly to its explication. Of this kind are Heb. i. 5, 6. "I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son:" ii. 6. "One in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him?" iii. 7. "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." There are many passages of this kind in the New Testament.

5. In this class must be placed divisions into *different respects*, or different *views*. These, to speak properly, are not divisions of a text into its parts, but rather different applications, which are made of the same text to divers subjects. *Typical texts* should be divided thus; and a great number of *passages in the Psalms*, which relate not only to David, but also to Jesus Christ; such should be considered, first, literally, as they relate to

David; and then, in their mystical sense, as they refer to the Lord Jesus.

There are also typical passages, which beside their literal senses have also figurative meanings, relating not only to Jesus Christ, but also to the church in general, and to every believer in particular; or which have different degrees of their mystical accomplishment.*

For example, Dan ix. 7. "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face as at this day:" (which is a very proper text for a fast-day,) must not be divided into *parts*; but considered in different *views*. 1. In regard to *all men* in general. 2. In regard to the *Jewish church in Daniel's time*. And, 3. In regard to *ourselves at this present day*.

II. As to the *division of the text* itself, sometimes the order of the words is so clear and natural, that no division is necessary; you need only follow simply the order of the words. As for example, Eph. i. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ." It is not necessary to divide this text, because the words divide themselves; and to explain them we need only follow them. Here is a grateful acknowledgment, *blessed be God*. The title, under which the apostle blesses God, *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. The reason, for which he blesses him, because *he hath blessed us*. The plenitude of this blessing, *with all blessings*. The nature or kind, signified by the term, *spiritual*. The place, where he hath blessed us, *in heavenly places*. In whom he hath blessed us, *in Christ*.

* *Types* should be handled cautiously, and soberly, and always under the immediate direction of the New Testament writers. A man is always safe when he follows these guides.

Most texts, however, ought to be formally divided; for which purpose you must principally have regard to the order of nature, and put that division, which naturally precedes, in the first place; and the rest must follow, each in its proper order. This may easily be done by reducing the text to a categorical proposition, beginning with the subject, passing to the attribute, and then to the other terms; your judgment will direct you how to place them.*

* Oratio cujus summa virtus est perspicuitas, quam sit vitiosa si egeat interprete! *Quint. Inst. lib.* i. c. 4.

Allowing that texts are to be divided after reducing them to categorical, i. e. to single propositions, either simple, the subjects and predicates of which consist of single terms; or complex, the subjects and predicates of which are made up of complex terms; allowing that the *subject* is to be considered first, then the *attributes*, which in logic are the same with predicates, or what may be affirmed or denied of any subject; allowing all this, yet it must not be forgotten that this operation, and these terms belong to the laboratory, and should never appear in prescriptions to the people; especially as Mr. Claude's proposed end may be better answered without them. He aims to make divisions *natural;* here is an example.

Archbishop Flechier, on Saul's conversion, considers, first, *what Jesus Christ did for St. Paul.* 2. *What St. Paul did for Jesus Christ.* In the first part he opens divine compassion, as a spring whence flowed Paul's creation, preservation, conversion, gifts, graces, usefulness, &c. The second part relates the use that St. Paul made of all these out of gratitude, and to God's glory. *Flech. Ser. tom.* i.

The Archbishop of Cambray, *Fenelon*, (preaching to a religious order, some of whom had been employed in missions to the East, from Isa. lx. 1. *Arise, shine, for thy light is come*, &c. introduces his division thus; 'But I feel my heart moved within me; it is divided between joy and grief; the ministry of these apostolic men, and the call of these Eastern people, are the triumphs of religion; but perhaps they may also be the effects of a secret reprobation, which hangs over us. Perhaps these people may rise upon our ruins, as the Gentiles rose upon the ruins of the Jews. Let us then *rejoice* in the Lord; but let us rejoice with *trembling*. These two exhortations divide my discourse. *Fenel. Oeuvr.* tom. ii.

Bishop *Massillon*, preaching to his clergy, on Luke ii. 34, "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel," after an agreeable exordium, says, 'Let us pass all other reasons of this mystery, and confine ourselves to one single truth, which regards ourselves.' He then accommodates the words to every minister entering on his holy office, adding, 'for on this solemn occasion it may be said of him, Behold *this man is set for the fall*, or *rising again of many*

It remains to be observed, that there are two natural orders, one natural in regard to subjects themselves, the other natural in regard to us. The first considers every thing in its natural situation, as things are *in themselves*, without any regard to our knowledge of them; the other, which I call natural *in regard to us*, observes the situation, which things have as they appear in our minds, or enter into our thoughts.

When in any text the natural order of things differs from that, which regards our knowledge of them, we may take that way, which we like best; however, I believe, it would be best to follow that of our knowledge, because it is easiest, and clearest for the common people.

There are texts, which contain the end and the means; the cause and the effect; the principle and the consequence deduced from the principle; the action and the principle of the action; the occasion and the motive of the occasion: in these cases it is arbitrary either to begin with the means, and afterwards treat of the end; with the effect, and proceed to the cause, and so on; or to follow the contrary order. For instance, 2 Tim. ii. 10. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ with eternal glory." It is plain, that the text has three

in Israel; he comes to be the instrument of the *perdition*, or the *salvation* of many. On this terrible alternative runs the destiny of a minister, and it is literally true of every one of you, that you already are, or are about to be established to build up, or to pull down; to rid the church of scandals, or to cause new ones; to save or to destroy; in one word, to be a *savour of life unto life*, or *of death unto death* among the people; these are the two parts, &c.'

I will not say that these gentlemen did not reduce their texts to categorical propositions in private, in the study; but I may venture to say, if they did, they brought them to a right issue in the pulpit. And this I think is Mr. *Claude's* meaning. *Robinson.*

parts; the *sufferings* of the apostle; the *end* he proposes; and the *principle*, from which he proposes this end. The order is then arbitrary; you may either speak, first of St. Paul's *love* to the elect; secondly of the *salvation*, which he desired they might obtain in Jesus Christ; and thirdly, of the *sufferings*, which he endured in order to their obtaining it; or, first of his *sufferings;* secondly of the *end*, which he proposed in them, the salvation of the elect with eternal glory; and thirdly, of his *love* for the elect, which is the principle.

But though, in general, you may follow which of the two orders you please, yet there are some texts, that determine the division; as Phil. ii. 13. "It is God who worketh effectually in you, both to will, and to do, of his own good pleasure." There are, it is plain, three things to be discussed; the *action* of God's grace upon men, *God worketh effectually in you;* the *effect* of this grace, *to will and to do;* and the *spring* or source of the action, according to *his good pleasure.* I think the division would not be proper if we were to treat, 1. Of God's good *pleasure.* 2. Of his *grace.* And 3. Of the *will* and *works* of men. I should rather begin with volition and action, which are the *effects* of grace; then I should speak of the *grace* itself, which produces willing and doing in us effectually; and lastly, of the *source* of this grace, which is the good pleasure of God. In short, it is always necessary to consult good sense, and never to be so conducted by general rules as not to attend to particular circumstances.

Above all things, in divisions, take care of putting any thing in the first part, which supposes the understanding of the second, or which obliges you to treat of the second to make the first understood; for by these

means you will throw yourself into a great confusion, and be obliged to make many tedious repetitions. You must endeavour to disengage the one from the other as well as you can; and when your parts are too closely connected with each other, place the most detached first, and endeavour to make that serve for a foundation to the explication of the second, and the second to the third; so that at the end of your explication the hearer may with a glance perceive, as it were, a perfect body, or a finished building; for one of the greatest excellencies of a sermon is, the harmony of its component parts, that the first leads to the second, the second serves to introduce the third; that, they which go before, excite a desire for those, which are to follow; and, in a word, that the last has a special relation to all the others, in order to form in the hearer's mind a complete idea of the whole.

This cannot be done with all sorts of texts, but with those only, which are proper to form such a design upon. Remember, too, it is not enough to form such a plan; it must also be happily executed.

You will often find it necessary in texts, which you reduce to categorical propositions, to treat of the *subject*, as well as of the attribute: then you must make of the subject one part. This will always happen, when the subject of the proposition is expressed in terms, that want explaining, or which furnish many considerations: For example; "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This is a categorical proposition, and you must needs treat of the subject, *he who abides in Jesus Christ, and in whom Jesus Christ abides.* So again, "He that believeth in me, hath everlasting life." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh

my blood, abideth in me, and I in him." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them, that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." The two last ought to be reduced to categorical propositions, the subjects of which are, *they who are in Christ.* In these, and in all others of the same kind, the subject must make one part, and must also be considered first, for it is more natural, as well as most agreeable to the rules of logic, to begin with the subject of a proposition. Sometimes it is necessary not only to make one part of the subject, and another of the attribute; but also to make a third of the connexion of the subject with the attribute. In this case, you may say, after you have observed in the first place the subject, and in the second the attribute, that you will consider in the third the *entire sense of the whole proposition;* this must be done in these texts; "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "He, that believeth in me, hath eternal life," &c.

Sometimes there are, in texts reduced to categorical propositions, terms, which in the schools are called syncategorematica, and they relate sometimes to the subject and sometimes to the attribute.*

When in a text there are several terms, which need a particular explanation, and which cannot be explained without confusion, or without dividing the text into too many parts, then I would not divide the *text* at all: but I would divide the *discourse* into two or three parts; and I would propose, first to explain the terms, and then the subject itself. This would be necessary on Acts ii. 27;

* *Syncategorematica.* Of this kind are those words, which of themselves signify nothing, but in conjunction with others in a proposition are very significant.

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in the grave, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." To discuss this text properly, I think, the discourse should be divided into three parts, the first consisting of some *general considerations*, to prove that the text relates to Jesus Christ, and that Peter alleged it properly: The second of some *particular considerations* on the *terms*, *soul*, which signifies *life; grave*, which also signifies *hell;* on which the church of Rome grounds her opinion of Christ's descent into, what her divines call *limbus patrum; holy*, which in this place signifies immortal, unalterable, *indestructible; corruption*, which means not the *moral* corruption of sin, but the *natural corruption* of the body. Finally, we must examine the *subject* itself, the *resurrection* of Jesus Christ.

In texts of *reasoning*, the propositions which compose the syllogism must be examined one after another, and each apart.

Sometimes it will be even necessary to consider the *force* of the reasoning, and to make one part of that also.

There are texts of reasoning, which are composed of an *objection* and the *answer*, and the division of such is plain; for they naturally divide into the objection and the solution. As Rom. vi. 1, 2. "What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid: how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Divide this into two parts, the objection, and the answer. The objection is, first, proposed in general terms, *what shall we say then?* 2. In more particular terms, *shall we continue in sin?* And, 3. The reason and ground of the objection, *because grace abounds.* The solution of the question is the same. In general, *God forbid.* In particular, *how shall we live in sin?* And the reason, *we are dead to sin.*

There are some *texts* of reasoning, which are extremely *difficult* to divide, because they cannot be reduced to many propositions without confusion, or savouring too much of the schools, or having a defect in the division; in short, without being unsatisfactory. In such a case, let ingenuity and good sense contrive some extraordinary way, which, if proper and agreeable, cannot fail of producing a good effect. For example, John iv. 10. "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water:" I think it might not be improper to divide it into *two* parts, the first including the *general propositions* contained in the words, and the second, the *particular application* of these to the Samaritan woman. In the first, observe these following propositions: That Jesus Christ is the *gift* of God.—That though he asked for drink, he is the *fountain of living water* himself.—That he is the *object* of our knowledge, both as the *gift* of God, and as the *fount* of living water.—That an *application* to him for this living water, flows from our knowledge of him.—That he gives the water of life to *all, who ask it.* In the second part you may observe, that Jesus Christ did not disdain to converse with a *woman*, a Samaritan woman, a *schismatic*, out of the communion of the visible church, a very *wicked* woman, a woman, who in her schism and sin *disputed* against the truth.—That Jesus Christ *improved this opportunity* to teach her his grace, without amusing himself with directly answering what she said.—You may remark the *ignorance* of this woman in regard to the Lord Jesus; she saw him; she heard him; but she did not know him: from which you may observe, that this is the general condition of sinners, who have God always be-

fore their eyes, yet never perceive him.—That from the woman's ignorance arose her *negligence* and loss of such a fair opportunity of being instructed. Observe also the *mercy* of Jesus Christ towards her; for he even promised to save her. When he said, "If thou wouldest have asked of him he would have given thee living water;" it was as much as if he had offered to instruct her.—Remark, too, that Jesus Christ went even so far as to *command* her to ask him for living water; for when he said, "If thou wouldest have asked him," he did as much as say, ask him now.—Observe, finally, that he *excited* her to seek, and to know him, and removed her ignorance, the cause of all her mistakes, and miseries.

There are sometimes *texts which imply* many important *truths* without expressing them, and yet it will be necessary to mention and enlarge upon them, either because they are useful on some important occasion, or because they are important of themselves. Then the text must be divided into two parts, one implied, and the other expressed. I own this way of division is bold, and must neither be abused, nor too often used; but there are occasions, it is certain, on which it may be very justly and agreeably taken. A certain preacher on a fast-day, having taken for his subject these words of Isaiah, "Seek the Lord while he may be found," divided his text into two parts, one implied, the other expressed. In the *first* he said, that there were *three* important truths, of which he was obliged to speak: 1. That *God* was *far from us.* 2. That *we* were *far from him.* And, 3. That there was a *time*, in which God would not be found, although we sought him. He spoke of these one after another. In the first he enumerated the *afflictions* of the church, in a most affecting manner: observing

that all these sad events did but too plainly prove the absence of the favour of God. 2. He enumerated the *sins* of the church, and shewed how distant we were from God. And in the third place he represented that sad time, when God's patience was, as it were, wearied out, and added, that then he displayed his heaviest judgments without speaking any more the language of mercy. At length coming to the part *expressed*, he explained what it was to *seek* the Lord, and by a pathetic *exhortation*, stirred up his hearers to make that search. Finally, he explained what was the *time*, in which God would be found, and renewed his exhortations to *repentance*, mixing therewith hopes of pardon, and of the blessing of God. His sermon was very much admired, particularly for its order.

In *texts of history*, divisions are easy: sometimes an action is related in all its *circumstances*, and then you may consider the *action* in itself first, and afterward the *circumstances* of the action.

Sometimes it is necessary to remark the *occasion* of an action, and to make one part of it.

Sometimes there are *actions* and *words*, which must be considered *separately*.

Sometimes it is not necessary to make any division at all: but the order of the history must be followed. In short, it depends on the state of each text in particular.

III. To render a division agreeable, and easy to be remembered by the hearer, endeavour to reduce it as often as possible to simple terms. By a simple term I mean a *single word*, in the same sense as in logic what they call *terminus simplex* is distinguished from what they call *terminus complex*. Indeed, when the parts of a discourse

are expressed in abundance of words, they are not only embarrassing, but also useless to the hearers, for they cannot retain them. Reduce them then as often as you can to a single term.

Observe also, as often as possible, to *connect* the parts of your division together; either by way of opposition, or of cause and effect, or of action and end, or action and motive, or in some way or other; for to make a division of many parts, which have no connexion, is exceedingly offensive to the hearers, who will be apt to think, that all you say, after such a division, is nonsense; besides, the human mind naturally loving order, it will much more easily retain a division, in which there appears a connexion.*

As to *subdivisions*, it is always necessary to make them; for they very much assist composition, and diffuse perspicuity through a discourse: but it is not always needful to mention them; on the contrary, they must be very seldom mentioned; because it would load the hearer's mind with a multitude of particulars. Nevertheless, when subdivisions can be made agreeably, either on account of the excellence of the matter, or when it will raise the hearer's attention, or when the justness of parts harmonize agreeably one with another, you may formally mention them; but this must be done very seldom; for the hearers would be presently tired of such a method, and by that means cloyed of the whole.†

* This direction of Mr. Claude's, like most of his other rules, is founded on the knowledge of human nature, which delights in orderly connexions, and is extremely disgusted with every thing incongruous. *Robinson.*

† Powerful reasoning should be the soul of all our sermons. Reasoning in eloquence is like love in religion; without love you may have the shadow, but you cannot have the substance of religion.—Without love you are *nothing;* if you have not love, your virtue is only noise, it is only as sounding brass and a

CHAP. V.

OF TEXTS TO BE DISCUSSED BY WAY OF EXPLICATION.

I PROCEED now from general to more particular rules, and will endeavour to give some precepts for invention and disposition.

I suppose, then, in the first place, that no man will be so rash as to put pen to paper, or begin to discuss a text, till he has well comprehended the sense of it. I have given no rule about this before; for a man, who wants to be told, that he ought not to preach on a text, before he understands it, ought at the same time to be informed, that he is fitter for any other profession than that of a minister.

I suppose, secondly, that the student, having well understood, the sense of his text, begins by dividing it, and that, having the several parts before his eyes, he very nearly sees what are the subjects, which he will have to discuss, and consequently, what ought to enter into his composition.

I suppose, farther, that he is a man not altogether a novice in divinity; but that he is acquainted with common places, and the principal questions, of which they treat.

Supposing all these, the first thing that I would have such a man do, is to observe the *nature of his text;* for

tinkling cymbal. In like manner in regard to eloquence, speak with authority, open all the treasures of erudition, give full scope to a lively and sublime imagination, and harmonize your periods; yet what will all your discourses without *reason* be? a noise, a sounding brass, a tinkling cymbal. You may confound, but you cannot convince; you may dazzle, but you cannot instruct; you may delight, but cannot hope to change, to sanctify, and to transform your hearers. SAURIN.

there are doctrinal, historical, prophetical, and typical texts. Some contain a command, others a prohibition; some a promise, others a threatening; some a wish, others an exhortation; some a censure, others a motive to action; some a parable, some a reason; some a comparison of two things together, some a vision, some a thanksgiving; some a description of the wrath, or majesty of God, of the sun, or some other thing; a commendation of the law, or of some person; a prayer; an amplification of joy, or affliction; a pathetic exclamation of anger, sorrow, admiration, imprecation, repentance, confession of faith, patriarchal or pastoral benediction, consolation, &c. I take the greatest part to be mixed, containing different kinds of things. It is very important for a man, who would compose, to examine his text well upon these articles, and carefully to distinguish all its characters, for in so doing he will presently see what way he ought to take.

Having well examined of what kind the text is, enter into the matter, and begin the composition; for which purpose you must observe, there are two general ways, or two manners of composing. One is the way of *explication*, the other of *observations*; nor must it be imagined, that you may take which of the two ways you please on every text, for some texts must be treated in the explicatory method, and others necessarily require the way of observations. When you have a point of *doctrine* to treat of, you must have recourse to explication, and when a text of *history*, the only way is observation.

In discernment upon this article the judgment of a man consists; for as texts of scripture are almost infinite, it is impossible to give perfect rules thereupon; it de-

pends in general on good sense; only this I say, when we treat of a plain subject, common and known to all the world, it is a great absurdity to take the way of *explication;* and when we have to treat of a difficult or important subject, which requires explaining, it would be equally ridiculous to take the way of *observations.*

The difficulty, of which we speak, may be considered, either in regard to the *terms* of the text only, the subject itself being clear, after the words are explained; or in regard to the *subject* only, the terms themselves being very intelligible; or in regard to *both terms and things.*

If the terms be obscure, we must endeavour to give the true sense: but if they be clear, it would be trifling to affect to make them so; and we must pass on to the difficulty, which is in the subject itself. If the subject be clear, we must explain the terms, and give the true sense of the words. If there appear any absurdity or difficulty in *both*, both must be explained: but always begin with explanation of the terms.

In the explication of the *terms*, first propose what they call *ratio dubitandi*, that is, whatever makes the difficulty. The reason of doubting, or the intricacy, arises often from several causes. Either the terms do not seem to make any sense at all; or they are equivocal, forming different senses; or the sense, which they seem at first to make, may be perplexed, improper, or contradictory; or the meaning, though clear in itself, may be controverted, and exposed to cavillers. In all these cases, after you have proposed the difficulty, determine it as briefly as you can; for which purpose avail yourself of criticisms, notes, comments, paraphrases, &c. and, in one word, of the labours of other persons.

If none of these answer your expectation, endeavour to find something better yourself; to which purpose, examine all the circumstances of the text, what precedes, what follows, the general scope of the discourse, the particular design of the writer in the place, where your text is, the subject of which it treats, parallel passages of scripture, which treat of the same subject, or those in which the same expressions are used, &c. and by these means it is almost impossible, that you should not content yourself. Above all, take care not to make of grammatical matters a principal part: but only treat of them as previously necessary for understanding the text.

To proceed from terms to *things*. They must, as I have said, be explained, when they are either difficult or important. There are several ways of explication. You may begin by *refuting* errors, into which people have fallen; or you may fall upon the subject immediately, and so come to a fair and precise *declaration of the truth*, and, after this, you may *dilate*, (if I may venture to say so) by a deduction of the principles, on which the text depends, and on the essential relations, in which it ought to be considered.

The same method must be taken, when texts are misunderstood, and gross and pernicious errors adduced. In such a case, first reject the erroneous sense, and (if necessary) even refute it, as well by reasons taken from the texts, as by arguments from other topics, and at length establish the true sense.

I would advise the same method for *all disputed texts*. Hold it as a maxim, to begin to open the way to a truth by rejecting a falsehood. Not that it can be always done; sometimes you must begin by explaining the truth, and afterwards reject the error; because there are certain

occasions, on which the hearers' minds must be pre-occupied, and because also truth, well proposed and fully established, naturally destroys error: but, notwithstanding this, the most approved method is to begin by rejecting error. After all, it must be left to a man's judgment when he ought to take different courses.

There are texts of explication, in which the difficulty arises neither from equivocal terms, nor from the different senses, in which they may be taken, nor from objections, which may be formed against them, nor from the abuse, which heretics have made of them; but from the *intricacy of the subject itself*, which may be difficult to comprehend, and may require great study and meditation. On such texts you need not, you must not amuse yourself in proposing difficulties, nor in making objections: but you must enter immediately into the explication of the matter, and take particular care to arrange your ideas well, that is to say, in a natural and easy order, beginning where you ought to begin; for if you do not begin right you can do nothing to the purpose; and on the contrary, if you take a right road, all will appear easy as you go on to the end.

If, for example, I were to preach from this text, "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; I would divide this text into two parts. The first should regard the ministry of the law; the second, that of the gospel: the one expressed in these words, "the law was given by Moses;" the other in these, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." I should subdivide the first into two parts, the *law*, and its *author*, Moses.*

* Instead of the remarks on this passage, which in Robinson's Claude occupy forty six pages, Mr. Simeon's abridgement is here inserted, in the form of a *regular scheme*.

I. The ministry of the law.

The law may be considered as a ministry of *Rigour*, as opposed to *Grace.*

[Man knew neither himself nor his God—
It was necessary therefore to discover to him his misery, and his duty—
This was the end which God proposed in the ministry of the law—
The ministration of the law was well calculated to answer this end*—]

It may be considered also as a ministry of *Shadows*, as opposed to *Truth.*

[It held out *Promises* of what was afterwards to be accomplished†—
It exhibited in *Types* the mercies which God had in reserve for them—
It imparted *the Beginnings* of that salvation, which was to be afterwards more largely bestowed—
Yet it could only be called "*Law*," because, however the Grace of the Gospel was blended with that economy, the *legal* part was predominant—]

The author or dispenser of this law was Moses.

[God indeed was the first and principal author of this law—
Moses was only the Mediator by whom God dispensed it—
Nor as a Mediator was He a real, but only a typical Mediator.‡]

As the dispenser of it He was greatly honoured by God.

[He was the *Interpreter* of the Israelites to God, and of God to them§—
He was employed to *show forth the Mighty Power of Jehovah*—
He was inspired to *transmit in writing* the history of his own nation—]

* God awfully displayed his own majesty on Mount Sinai; and by the perfect law which he promulgated, He showed at once what a creature ought to do, and what a sinner must expect. And while by the ceremonial law he declared the necessity of an Atonement, he loaded the Israelites with an insupportable yoke of ceremonies, enforcing the observance of them by the severest penalties; and gave just such a portion of his Spirit, as might enable them to see their guilt and misery, and dispose them to receive the promised Messiah.

† Gen. iii. 15. and xlix. 10. Deut. xviii. 15.

‡ To prevent entirely the idea of his being *really* the Mediator of the Covenant, Divine Wisdom has recorded his sins and failings; and it is worthy of observation that the Priesthood was assigned, not to him, but to his brother Aaron; and that not he, but Joshua, had the honour of leading the Israelites into Canaan.

§ Exod. xx. 19.

II. The ministry of the Gospel.

"Grace and truth" are here put for the Gospel of Jesus Christ—

The Gospel is called *Grace*, in opposition to the *Rigours of the Law.*

[God manifested himself in it, not as on Mount Sinai with thunderings, but in a *gentle manner*, under the veil of human flesh—
In it he reveals his *mercy* and parental love—
It is his *free Gift* according to his *own good Pleasure*—
It is accompanied with a *Divine Efficacy* to the souls of men—
It operates on us, not enthusiastically, but in a *rational manner*—]

It is called *Truth*, in opposition to *Falsehood.*

[It is *the accomplishment* of what existed only in *promises* before—
It is *the substance* of what was before exhibited in *types**—
It is *the completion* of what, under the law, was only *begun*†—

The Author of this Gospel was Jesus Christ.

[He like Moses was an *Interpreter* between God and men—
His Ministry also, like Moses' was accompanied with *miracles*—
He moreover caused his Gospel to be *written* for a perpetual rule—]

As such He was honoured infinitely above Moses.

[Moses was only the *dispenser* of the law, but Christ was the *Author* of Grace and Truth—
Moses did not *procure* the Covenant of which he was mediator; whereas the Covenant of Grace was given, *not only through Christ*, but *on his account*—
Moses could only *report* God's will to men: but Jesus Christ both reported it to them, and became *a Guarantee* for their performance of it—
Moses was not the *source*, nor even the *dispenser* of the Spirit, that accompanied the legal economy; but Christ communicates the Spirit out of *his own fulness?*‡—
Moses wrought miracles by a *foreign* power; but Jesus Christ by *his own*—
Moses was established over *God's house* as a *servant;* but Jesus Christ as a *Son*, (i. e. a Master and Heir) over *his own house.*—]

There are some texts, which must be discussed by way of explication, although neither terms nor things are difficult; but because the matter is important, and a meditation of it beautiful and full of edification. Pas-

* Heb. x. i. † Rom. viii. 15. ‡ John i. 16.

sages of this kind must needs be proposed in all their extent.

Take, for example, these words of St. Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 7. "We have this treasure in earthern vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."*

* The terms and subject are easy, yet on account of the importance of the matter, the passage must be extensively proposed.

I. The apostle's *proposition*, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels."

1. What is the *treasure?* It is the *gospel of Christ;* and so called,

On account of its *worth* and excellence.

Because of its *abundance.*

For its *truth* and reality.

Because it cannot be *possessed* without joy, jealousy, caution, &c.

Because in the context it is called *light*, *glory*, *knowledge*—of God.

It is deposited in the hands of *ministers.*

It is a treasure in *all* who enjoy it; but most in *ministers;* especially as the *apostles* possessed it. In all its *extent*, *degrees*, and *purity.*

It is a treasure in opposition to the false *treasures of the earth.*

It was once hid in God's decrees, but is now *displayed.*

2. But this treasure is as in *earthen vessels.*

The passage probably *alludes* to Gideon's pitchers and lamps.

The word in *angels* was in *precious* vessels.

When God revealed it *himself*, it was *without* vessels.

When God declared himself by the *sun*, *moon*, &c. it was in vessels of *grandeur.*

The apostles are *vessels;* not authors of the gospel, but *instruments.*

They were *earthen* vessels, for the *meanness* of their conditions.

For the *afflictions* to which they were subject.

In regard to their own *infirmities.*

Yet the apostles wisely *magnified their office* for their *treasure*, while they humbled, and as it were, *annihilated themselves*, calling themselves *earthen vessels.*

II. The *reason* assigned. "That the excellency of the power," &c.

1. The *excellency of the power* of the gospel. This consists,

In the happy *success* of the gospel in the *conversion* of men.

There is a *divine virtue* in the doctrine of the gospel to humble, comfort, instruct, exhilerate, embolden, &c.

Miracles accompanied the preaching of the *apostles.*

The *energy of the Holy Ghost* accompanied the preaching of the *gospel.*

2. The *end* that God proposed; "That this power might appear *to be of him*, and not of men."

Men are inclined to ascribe all effects to *second* causes.

Thus the *Heathen* worshipped and served the creature more than God the Creator.

The *Lycaonians* would fain have sacrificed to Paul and Barnabas.

Observe, farther, there are *two* sorts of explications. The first is simple and plain, and needs only to be *proposed*, and enlivened with clear and agreeable elucidations.

The other kind of explications must not only be stated and explained; but they must also be *confirmed* by sufficient evidence. Sometimes a text speaks of a *fact*, which can be confirmed only by proofs of fact; sometimes it is a matter of *right*, that must be established by proofs of right; and sometimes it is a subject made up of *both* fact and right, and consequently proofs of right, as well as proofs of fact, must be adduced. We will give an example of each.

For the first, take this text, Phil. ii. 6. "Jesus Christ, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Having explained what it is to be in the *form of God*, and to *count it not robbery to be equal with God*, namely, that it is to be God, essentially equal with the Father, and co-eternal with him, &c. you must needs make use of proofs of *fact* on this occasion; for, every one sees, it is a fact, which it is necessary to *prove*,

The *Jews*, who should have known better, were disposed to ascribe undue power to Peter and John.

And *John himself* was surprised by this inclination, when he fell prostrate before the angel.

We see the same spirit in the *church of Rome*.

God therefore, took this method, in order to *stem* this torrent, and to *preclude* such abuses.

Besides, their *meanness* contributed to display the glory of the *divine power*.

Never did the power of Jesus Christ appear more, than when he subjugated principalities and powers, and triumphed over them by the ministry of the cross. These *earthen vessels* triumphed over the whole world with the sound of their voice. Idols fell; temples were demolished; oracles were struck dumb; the people flocked in crowds to adore Jesus Christ. It is not enough to say, "This is the *finger of God*;" we must rather exclaim, "This is the out-stretched *arm of the Lord*."

CLAUDE.

not merely by the force of St. Paul's terms; but also by many other Scripture-proofs, which establish the divinity of Jesus Christ.

But were you to preach from the 14th and 15th verses of the same chapter, "Do all things without murmurings, and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life;" it is evident, that, after you have explained the vices, which St. Paul forbids, and the virtues which he recommends, the exhortation must be confirmed by reasons of *right*, which show how unworthy and contrary to our calling these vices are; how much beauty and propriety in the virtues enjoined; and how strong our obligations are to abstain from the one, and to practise the other.

Our third example includes proofs of *both* kinds. Take the seventh verse of the same chapter, "Jesus Christ made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" or the 8th verse, "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient to the death of the cross:" or the 9th verse, which speaks of Christ's exaltation. Having explained the subject, you must endeavour to confirm it, not only by proofs of fact, but also by proofs of right; to which purpose you must prove, 1. That the fact *is*, as St. Paul says. And 2. That it *ought to be*, as it is, by reasons taken from the wisdom of God, &c.

In like manner in discussing this text, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;" after you have proposed in a few words the apostle's doctrine, it ought to be confirmed, as

well by proofs of fact, which make it plain, that God has always been pleased to observe this method, as by proofs of right, which show that he does thus with a great deal of wisdom. You will meet with an almost infinite number of texts of this nature.

There are sometimes texts of explication, in which we are obliged to explain some one great and important article consisting of many branches. As for example, predestination; and efficacious, converting grace. In this case you may either reduce the matter to a certain number of *propositions*, and discuss them one after another; or you may reduce them to a certain number of *questions*, and discuss them in like manner: but you ought (choose which way you will) to take particular care not to lay down any proposition, or any question, which is not formally contained in your text, or which does not follow by a near and easy consequence; for otherwise you would discuss the matter in a common-place way.

For example. "It is God, who worketh effectually in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure."*

Above all, take care to *arrange* your propositions well, when you take this method. Place the most general first, and follow the order of your knowledge, so

* The thing to be explained is, the operation of divine grace; and it is to be explained in an immediate reference to the text. It might be said then, that its operation is *sovereign*, *rational*, *efficacious*. *It* is *sovereign*, the result of "God's good pleasure," since man has not so much as a disposition to do good, till God has given it him; and therefore can have nothing in himself that can induce God to give it him. It is *rational;* for God influences us to action, not as mere machines, but by illuminating our understanding, and inclining our "will." It is *efficacious;* for if he work in us "to will," he will surely work in us "to do;" nor, however separate, in idea, volition and action may be, shall they ever be separated in his people's experience.

This would include the principal observations of Mr. Claude, and render them both more intelligible, and *more easy to be remembered.* SIMEON.

that the first propositions may serve as steps to the second, the second to the third, and so of the rest.*

Sometimes, what you have to explain in a text will consist of one or more *simple terms ;* sometimes in certain ways of speaking *peculiar* to Scripture, or at least of such great importance, that they will deserve to be particularly weighed and explained; sometimes in *particles* which they call syncategorematica; and sometimes in propositions. For example, *simple terms*, are, the divine attributes, goodness, mercy, wisdom, &c. The virtues of men, faith, hope, love, &c. Their vices and passions, ambition, avarice, vengeance, wrath, &c. In short, simple terms are single words, and they are either *proper*, or *figurative.* In order to explain *figurative* words, you must give the *meaning* of the figure in a few words; and without stopping long upon the figure, pass to the thing itself. And in general observe this rule, *never insist long on a simple term, unless it be absolutely necessary ;* for to aim at exhausting, (as it were) and saying all, that can be said, on a single word, is imprudent in a preacher, especially when there are many important matters in the text to be explained. Should any one (for example) in explaining these words of Isaiah, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," should a preacher, I say, insist on each term, and endeavour to exhaust each word, he would handle the text in a common-place way, and quite tire the hearer. You ought then, in discussing such passages, to select the most obvious articles, and to enlarge principally on essential remarks.

* *Arrange your propositions well.* Nothing elucidates a subject more than a conformity to this rule. Cicero's three words are well known, *apte*, *distincte*, *ornate.*

Sometimes there are simple terms, of which you must only take notice cursorily, and *en passant*, as it were, just as they relate to the intention of the sacred author. For example, in St. Paul's ordinary salutations, "Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ," it must not be imagined, that each of the terms or phrases is to be considered *ex professo*, either *grace*, or *peace*, or *God the Father*, or *Jesus Christ:* but the whole text is to be considered as a *salutation*, a benediction, an introduction to the epistle, and in these views make necessary remarks on the terms. In one word, take care to explain simple terms as much as possible in relation to the present *design* of the sacred author, and to the circumstances of the text; for by these means you will avoid common-places, and say proper and agreeable things.

Sometimes you will meet with texts, the simple terms of which must be discussed professedly; and in order to give a clear and full view of the subject, you must give a clear and distinct idea of the terms.

When there are many simple terms in a text, you must consider, whether it would not be more proper to treat of them *comparatively* with each other, than to discuss them separately or each apart; for sometimes it would be very injudicious to discuss them separately, and very agreeable to do it by *comparison*. Take for example St. Luke's words, chap. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11. "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold! I bring you good tidings of great joy, which

shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." In my opinion it would be very absurd to pretend to treat separately these simple terms, in order to explain what is a *shepherd*, and what is an *angel*, &c. But a *comparison* of these terms with each other would afford very beautiful and agreeable considerations, as will appear by the following analysis of the text. Let it then be divided into two parts; let the first be the *appearance* of the angels to the shepherds with all the circumstances, which the history remarks: and the second, the angel's *message* to them. The first is contained in the eighth and ninth verses, and the second in the tenth and eleventh.

As to the first, you may remark, that this meeting of the angel and shepherds was not accidental or by chance, but by the order of the providence of God, who there placed the shepherds, and thither sent his angel. You may amplify this by showing,

1. *That God causes his grace to descend not only upon the great and powerful of the world, but also on the most simple and inconsiderable.*

2. That it seems as if he took more pleasure in bestowing his favours on the *most abject* than in distributing them among persons of elevated rank. Matt. xi. 25. 1 Cor. i. 26. For while he sent the *wise men* of the East to Herod, he sent an *angel* of heaven to the shepherds, and conducted them to the cradle of the Saviour of the world.

3. That in this meeting of the angels and shepherds, there is a *character of the economy* of Jesus Christ, wherein the highest and most sublime things are joined with the meanest and lowest. In his person the eternal word is united to a creature, the divine nature to the hu-

man, the Lord of Glory to mean flesh and blood. In his baptism he is plunged in the water, and the Father speaks to him from heaven; he is under the hand of John the Baptist, and the Holy Ghost descends upon him. In his temptation he hungers, yet miraculously supports a fast of forty days: the devil tempts him and angels obey him. On his cross, naked, crowned with thorns and exposed to sorrows, yet at the same time shaking the earth and eclipsing the sun. Here in like manner angels are familiar with shepherds: angels to mark his majesty, shepherds his humility; angels because he is Creator and master of all things; shepherds because he made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant.

After this you may make a proper reflection on the *time* mentioned by St. Luke, who says, "The shepherds were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." You may observe that while these shepherds were busy in their *calling*, God sent his angel to them; and that, however simple and mean the employments of men may be, it is always very pleasing to God when they discharge them with a good conscience.

Remark a second circumstance; *The glory of the Lord* shining around the shepherds. Here you may observe,

That when angels borrow human forms to appear to men, (as it is likely this angel did, when he appeared to the shepherds) they have always appeared with some *ensigns of grandeur* and majesty, to show that they were not men but angels, that is to say, beings of a superior order. Thus the angels, who appeared at Christ's resurrection, were clothed with *shining garments;* and so were they, who appeared to the disciples after his as-

cension. Here the angel is accompanied with a great *light shining* around the shepherds.

The third remarkable circumstance in the text, is the great *fear* with which the shepherds were seized.

1. This was an effect of their great *surprise.* When grand objects suddenly present themselves to us, they must needs fill us with astonishment and fear.

2. This fear also arose perhaps from emotions of *conscience.* Man is by nature a sinner, and consequently an object of the justice and vengeance of God; when therefore, any thing extraordinary and divine appears to him, he necessarily trembles. This may be exemplified by Adam, who, having sinned, fled, and, the moment he heard the voice of God, hid himself; or by the Israelites, who were terrified, when God appeared to them upon the mountain: and hence that proverbial saying among them, *we shall die, for we have seen God.*

But, as the thoughts of God are far different from the thoughts of men, these poor shepherds did not long remain in this state: but joy presently succeeded their fear. *Fear not*, said the Angel, *behold! I bring you glad tidings.* Agreeable surprise! far different from what will befal sinners at the last day; for when they cry, *Peace, peace, then sudden destruction shall come upon them:* but here, when the shepherds trembled, when they were seized with a dreadful horror, which made them apprehend all danger, forth issues the greatest of all joys, the most affecting of all consolations, the news of the birth of the Saviour of the world.

Proceed now to the second part of the text; the Angel's *discourse* to the shepherds. And observe,

1. The Angel says to them, *Fear not.* He uses this

preface to gain their *attention*, which fear (no doubt) had almost entirely dissipated.

After this preface the Angel acquits himself of his commission, and announces to the shepherds the great and mysterious news of the Redeemer's birth. "Behold!" says he, "I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Remark in the front of his message the word *behold*, which is generally used in scripture to denote the greatness and importance of the subject in question, and to gain attention. The prophets had often used it. Isaiah on a like account had said, *Behold!* a virgin shall conceive. Zechariah had cried, Daughter of Zion, *Behold!* thy king cometh, just, and having salvation. Malachi had said, *Behold!*—the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple. It is easy to remark, that the angel could never more properly use this word than on this occasion. Do you doubt of it? Hear his message. *I bring you*, says he to them, *glad tidings of great joy.*

In order to examine the words properly, you must begin with the Angel's description of the *person*, of whom he speaks; *a Saviour, Christ the Lord.* Then pass to *what* he says about him; *he is born unto you*, says he. He marks the *time; this day.* He describes the *place; in the city of David.* And, in fine, he specifies the *nature* of this important news; *a great joy, which shall be to all people.*

Having considered his titles in general, and each apart, you may proceed to consider them in *a comparative* view. This comparison may be of the words with

each other, or with the *other parts of the text*, or with the words which *follow* the text.

In the *first* view, you may say, that the Angel intended primarily to give the shepherds an idea of the benefits, which they might expect of the Messiah, and for this reason began with the title *Saviour*, in order to affect them with their own interest, and indeed with the greatest of all interests. Afterwards, to confirm their hope upon that point, he rises to the source of this salvation, the mercy of God, who bestowed it on them; therefore he says, the Saviour is *Christ*, that is, the promised Messiah. In fine, in order to convince them with what profound respect men ought to receive him, he adds, that he is sovereign *Lord*. In the title *Saviour*, he shows the *end* of Christ's coming into the world. In that of *Christ*, the *right*, which he had to undertake so great a work, which was the Father's mission, who for that purpose had anointed him. And in that of *Lord*, he marks the sovereign *power*, with which he should happily execute the office, that the Father had committed to him.

In comparing these three titles with the *other parts of the text*, you may show, that the Angel calls him *a Saviour*, to justify that *great joy*, *which*, says he, *I bring you*. That he calls him *Christ*, the Son of God, the promised Messiah, with relation to his *birth in the city of David*. And that he calls him *Lord*, to render, in some sort, a reason for an angel's coming with the glad tidings; as if he had said, *I bring you* the glad tidings, because he is *Lord* of all, both yours and ours.

In comparing the words with what *follows*, you may observe, that the Angel calls him *a Saviour*, *Christ*, *the Lord*, in order to guard the shepherds against their be-

ing offended at what he was about to tell them, that they should *find* him *a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.* As if he had said, let not these sad appearances offend you; he whom you will find an infant, in swaddling clothes, and in a manger, is the Redeemer of the world, the true anointed of God, the Lord of the whole universe.

This Saviour, this Christ, this Lord, says the Angel, *is born unto you.*

Here you may commence a lively exhortation to joy, the motives to which may be taken from the terms of the text; that there is a *Saviour;* that he is *Christ;* that he is the *Lord;* that after being so long expected, at length he came; that he was *born for us;* that we have an interest in him above angels; that he has testified his love to us by submitting to sinless infirmities; you may compare his first with his last Advent, and dispose your auditors to feel a still greater joy in expectation of his coming to raise them from the dead, and putting the last hand to the work of our redemption; then will he appear a *Saviour* indeed, for he will complete the salvation of the faithful. Then will he appear a *Christ* indeed, for he will finish the design of his unction, and mill make us kings and priests to God his Father. Then will he appear *Lord* indeed, for all things shall be subjected to him, he will triumph over our enemies, he will swallow up death in victory, and he will elevate us to the possession of eternal glory.*

Having spoken of simple terms, I proceed to add something concerning *expressions peculiar to scripture.*

* This discourse was very long and tedious. *All that could elucidate the treating of texts by comparison* is retained; but that, which tended only to distract the mind, is expunged.

These deserve a particular explication, and should be discussed and urged with great diligence, as well, because they are peculiar modes of speaking, as because they are rich with meaning. In this class I put such forms of speaking as these. "To be in Christ Jesus. To come to Jesus Christ. To come after Jesus Christ. To live in the flesh. To live after the flesh. From faith to faith. From glory to glory. To walk after the flesh. To walk after the spirit. The old man. The new man. Jesus Christ lives in you. To live to Jesus Christ. To live to ourselves. To die to the world. To die to ourselves. To be crucified to the world. The world to be crucified to us. Jesus Christ made sin for us, we made the righteousness of God in him. Christ put to death in the flesh, quickened by the Spirit. Die unto sin. Live unto righteousness. Quench the Spirit. Grieve the Spirit. Resist the Holy Ghost. Sin against the the Holy Ghost." And I know not how many more such expressions, which are found almost no where but in scripture. Whenever you meet with such forms of speech as these, you must not pass them over lightly, but you must fully explain them, entering well into the spirit and meaning of them. It would be very convenient for a young man to procure for this purpose an exact collection, and endeavour to inform himself of the sense of each.

This subject would require, as it well deserves, a particular treatise; however, I will briefly give an example of the manner, in which expressions of this kind should be discussed. Let us take these words. Mark viii. 34. "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Methinks it would not be improper to divide the sermon into two parts. In the first we would treat of the *expressions*,

which Jesus uses, *Come after me—deny himself—take up his cross—and follow me.*—And in the second, we would examine the entire *sense* of our Saviour's *whole proposition.*

To begin then with the explication of these expressions. *To come after Jesus Christ* signifies no other thing than to be his disciples, to take him for the rule and model of our conduct, in a word, to profess an acknowledgment of him as our head and master, our supreme prophet and teacher, our pattern and exemplar.

Deny himself is an expression so singular, that it seems to shock reason and nature, and to suppose a thing difficult, yea, absolutely impossible, or at least extremely criminal. Yet, it is certain, nothing can be more holy, nothing more necessary, nothing more just, than this self-renunciation, which Jesus Christ here ordains. He does not mean, that we should divide ourselves from ourselves, or that we should hate ourselves; but he intends,

1. In general, that we should renounce all that is in us *excessive*, vicious and irregular; this he calls *self*, because corruption is become, as it were, natural to us, we being *conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity.*

2. He commands us particularly to renounce that violent, immoderate, and excessive *love*, which man in a state of depravity has for himself, making self-love his chief and only principle of action, in one word, being a god to himself.

3. He enjoins the renunciation of that false and perverse *pretence*, which all sinners have, that they are their own masters, that no one has a right over them, that to themselves only belongs the disposition of words, actions, and thoughts. The Saviour means, that, renouncing this unjust and foolish pretence, we should submit ourselves to the government and direction of God, confiding in the

conduct of his wisdom, and receiving him to reign in our hearts by his word and Spirit.

Take up his cross, is an expression consecrated by Jesus Christ to a sacred purpose, though it does not belong only to scripture style. Here two things are intended by it. The mystical cross of *conversion*, and the cross of *afflictions*.

1. *Conversion* is called in scripture a *cross;* because sin and carnal lusts are made to *die* within our hearts; this the scripture calls *crucifying the old man.*

2. *Afflictions* are justly called *crosses*, not only because nature suffers, but also because by these means we become the horror and reproach of the world.

Finally, *to follow Jesus Christ*, is, 1. To become his disciple, to *believe* his doctrine, to approve his maxims, to be persuaded of the truth of his mysteries and holiness of his laws.

2. *To follow* is to *imitate* him, to propose him as our exemplar and pattern in the whole conduct of our lives, to walk in the same way as he walked, in order to obtain communion with him in glory.

3. To *profess openly* our subjection to him, as our Master and Lord, to obey his orders, &c. In a word, *to follow* is the same as *to come after him*, which we just now explained.

This is the first part. The second consists in considering the *entire sense* of Jesus Christ's *whole* proposition. He means, then, that, if we would be really of the number of his disciples and followers, we must submit to two things, sanctification and affliction.

1. *Sanctification.* Here enter into the subject, and show how impossible it is to belong to Jesus Christ without forsaking sin, and entirely changing the life. "The

grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

These are St. Paul's words to Titus, and three things may be remarked in them, *grace*, *holiness*, and *glory*. And you may easily observe, that *grace*, conducts to *glory* only by means of *holiness:* take away *holiness*, and grace and glory can never be joined together. The apostle therefore does not say, 'The grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us to look for the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ;' but, he says, "The grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" and so to be looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Grace indeed ends in glory; but it can only do so by the intervention of holiness.

You may also allege, to the same purpose, the end of Jesus Christ's coming into the world, which was not only to destroy sin, as it subjected us to eternal punishment, but as sin. You may finally show, how much it is for the glory of the Father, and of Jesus Christ, and for the reality and plenitude of salvation, that the disciples of Jesus should be sanctified.

2. *Affliction.* Two things here must be discussed. 1. The truth of the *fact*, that true believers are exposed to afflictions in this world. 2. The *reasons* why the divine wisdom subjects believers to these trials.

1. The *truth of the fact* results 1. from the *examples*

of all the great servants of God who have appeared in the world to this day: as Noah, Abraham, Lot, Moses, St. Paul, and all the other apostles of Jesus Christ. 2. From the *whole history* of the church, which was always nourished and increased in afflictions. This may be illustrated by the burning bush, which appeared to Moses; or by the ship, into which Jesus and his apostles went, tossed with waves, and exposed to the violence of winds and storms.

2. The *reasons* for this dispensation of divine providence may be taken from a common-place of afflictions, as, by means of afflictions God *restrains our impetuous passions, exercises our virtues, detaches us from the world, elevates us to the hope of a better life, and displays the glory of* that admirable *providence*, which governs us. Afflictions also are particular honours, which God confers on us, by them enabling us to walk in the steps of Jesus Christ, and conforming us by them to our divine leader. For these reasons, and many more of the same kind, we may fairly conclude, that with profound wisdom Jesus Christ has called us to affliction, and joined the cross to the profession of true christianity.*

We have before observed, that, beside simple terms, nd singular expressions peculiar to scripture, there are also sometimes in texts, particles, that are called *syncategorematica*, which serve either for the augmentation or limitation of the meaning of the proposition. As the word *so* in John iii. 16. "God *so* loved the word." The word *now* in the viii. of Romans. "There is therefore *now* no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus;"—and in many more passages of the same kind.

* This is somewhat abridged, for the same reason as the foregoing.

Whenever you meet with these terms, carefully examine them; for sometimes the greatest part, and very often the whole of the explication, depends upon them, as we have already remarked on that passage just now mentioned, "God so loved the world:" for the chief article, in the doctrine of the love of God, is its greatness, expressed by the word *so*. It is the same with that other term *now*, "there is therefore *now* no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus;" for the word *now* shows, that it is a conclusion drawn from the doctrine of justification, which the apostle had taught in the preceding chapters, and it is as if he had said, From the principles, which I have established, it follows, that there is NOW no condemnation, &c. Having then explained, 1. What it is *to be in Christ Jesus*. 2. What it is to be "no more subject to condemnation," chiefly insist, in the third place, on the word *now;* and show, that it is a doctrine, which necessarily follows from what St. Paul had established touching justification in the foregoing chapters; so that this term makes a real part of the explication, and indeed the most important part.

Sometimes these terms in question are not of consequence enough to be much dwelt on: but may be more properly passed with a slight remark. The word *Behold*, with which many propositions in scripture begin, must be treated so; you must not make one part of this, nor insist on it too long. The same may be said of that familiar expression of Jesus Christ, *Verily*, *Verily*, which is an asseveration, or, if you will, an oath: but neither on this must you insist much. So again, *Amen*, or *so be it*, which closes some texts. *Woe be to you*, which Jesus Christ often repeats in the gospel, with many more of the same kind. I know no certain rule to distinguish

when they are important: but it must be left to the preacher's taste; and a little attention will make the necessary discernment very easy.

When the matter to be explained in a text consists of a *proposition*, you must, 1. *Give the sense clearly* and neatly, taking care to develope it of all sorts of ambiguity.

2. If it be requisite, show how *important* in religion it is to be acquainted with the truth in hand; and for this purpose open its connexion with other important truths; and its dependence on them; the inconveniences, that arise from negligence; the advantageous succours, which piety derives thence, with other things of the same nature.

3. Having placed it in a clear light, and shown its importance, if it require confirmation, *confirm* it. In all cases endeavour to *illustrate* either by *reasons*, or *examples*, or *comparisons*, of the subjects with each other, or by remarking their *relation* to each other, or by showing their *conformities*, or *differences*, all with a view to illustrate the matter that you are discussing. You may also illustrate a proposition by its *consequences*, by showing how many important inferences are included in it. and flow from it.

In fine, you may illustrate by the *person, who proposes* the subject; by the *state*, in which he was, when he proposed it; by the *persons, to whom* it is proposed; by *circumstances* of *time*, and *place*, &c. All these may give great openings; but they must be judiciously and discreetly used; for to attempt to make an assemblage of all these in the discussion of one proposition, would be trifling, endless, and pedantic.

Sometimes one single proposition *includes many truths*,

which it will be necessary to distinguish: but, in doing this, take care that each truth, on which you intend to insist, be of some importance in religion, not too common, nor too much known. This your own good sense must discern.

Sometimes one proposition must be discussed in the *different views*, in which it may be taken; and in this case you must remark those different relations.

Sometimes the doctrine contained in the proposition has different *degrees*, which it will also be necessary to remark.

Sometimes the proposition is *general*, and this generality seems to make it of little importance. In this case you must examine, whether some of its parts be not more considerable; if they be, you will be obliged to discuss these parts by a particular application.

First. To give the sense of a proposition neat and clear, and afterwards to confirm and illustrate it, let us take Eph. i. 18. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

This text must be divided into *two* parts. The first is the apostle's *prayer*, "May God enlighten the eyes of your understanding!" the second is the *end* of this illumination, "that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

1. The apostle's wish or prayer contains a proposition, which is, that "it is God who enlightens the eyes of our understanding." To give clearly the sense, you must first observe in a few words, that scripture frequently borrows the names and images of the faculties of the

body to represent those of the soul; therefore it gives us *feet* to *walk* in the way of righteousness, *hands* to *work* out our salvation, *knees* to *bow* at the name of Jesus, *ears* to *hear* the sacred truths of the gospel, a *mouth* to *eat* the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus Christ, and *eyes* to *see* the mysteries of his kingdom. All this is founded not only on the natural conformity, or resemblance, which there is between the operations of the soul and the organs of the body, but also on the scripture-manner of calling the whole of our regeneration and conversion *a new man.* Here, then, *eyes of the understanding* is an expression agreeable to the ordinary style of scripture, and signifies simply our *understanding*, the faculty by which we know and judge objects.

2. But, beside this, you must remark, that our eyes have two very different uses; one consists only in viewing objects indifferently, for no other purpose than our diversion; as when in a rural walk we look at the starry heavens, or admire extensive plains, and flowing rivers: this may be called a simple view of contemplation: the other goes farther, and consists not barely in seeing objects, but in looking at them so as to conduct and regulate our actions: so a traveller sees roads in his journey; so a man sees his friend to open his own heart, and ask his friend's advice; so a prisoner sees his deliverer to ask his freedom: this may be called a view of action or direction. Thus it is with the understanding; it has two functions, one a simple knowledge of objects, as of physical or metaphysical truths, called in the schools, *speculative knowledge:* the other a knowledge of objects in order to act by them, and to use them for a rule, and a guide, as when we know the nature of virtue, and the precepts of morality, the rules of art, and the maxims of

jurisprudence; this is what the schools call *practical knowledge.* Now, here the understanding is spoken of, not in the former, but latter sense; for the mysteries of the Christian religion are not mysteries of simple contemplation, the scripture does not propose them for our diversion, nor to gratify our curiosity; but they are mysteries of practice, which we ought to know, in order to act towards them, by embracing them with all the powers of our hearts, by receiving their impression and yielding to their energy; in one word, by making them a rule of our conduct. The apostle's proposition then means, That it is God, who by the interior light of his spirit opens the eyes of our understandings to receive, as we ought, the truths of his word, thereby enabling us to judge of them, to love and follow them, and to make them the rules of our conduct.

The proposition, thus explained, must be proved. This may be done directly, or indirectly; *indirectly* by producing divers passages of scripture, which represent the greatness of natural depravity, and the inability of man to convert himself. Such passages are very numerous, as where the heart is called an "an heart of stone." Where the prophet asks, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." A *direct* confirmation consists of passages, in which our conversion is formally ascribed to God, and to the efficacy of his spirit, which are also very numerous.

While you are confirming this proposition by scripture, you may mix an *illustration* of it by reasoning, by showing that our attachments to the world are so many and so strong, that supernatural grace is absolutely necessary to dissolve them; that the obscurities of our minds

arising either from our prejudices, or passions, or old habits, or the colours, under which the Gospel first presents itself to us, are such as render it impossible for us to judge rightly. This may be particularly inserted in the *indirect* way.

In the *direct* way you may also mix reasoning, by showing, that the divine wisdom determines, our regeneration should be all heavenly; that neither flesh, nor blood, nor natural principles contribute any thing; that the new man, being the pure work of the Holy Spirit, renders us more conformable to Jesus Christ; for, according to St. Paul, "God has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son." When Jesus Christ came into the world, he came not in the ordinary, natural way; but by a law above all laws in the world. He was made of a virgin, formed by the power of the Holy Ghost. God declares, that christians "are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of himself;" and on this account they are emphatically styled the children of God, and the brethren of Christ.

In confirming this proposition you may also illustrate it by some examples, as by that of the converted thief; that of St. Paul; that of the Jews, converted on the day of Pentecost, at the preaching of St. Peter, &c. In short, by any examples, in which the power of grace remarkably shone in conversion.

The subject may be illustrated by comparing conversion with the almighty work of God in creating the universe; and you may remark in a few words their conformities and differences.

You may illustrate by its *consequences*, showing the greatness and importance of the change wrought in men, when God opens the eyes of their understandings.

The illustration may flow from *inevidence*, by showing, that Jesus Christ alone has taught men this truth, that conversion is of God. All false religions attribute this work to man himself: philosophy is not acquainted with this grace from on high.

Finally, you may illustrate the subject by the *person who proposes it*, who is St. Paul. He had felt all its efficacy, fathomed, as it were, all its depth, and consequently could well speak of it. Or by the *persons to whom it was addressed*, the Ephesians, who had been reclaimed from the greatest superstition that was among the pagans, that is to say, the worship of Diana.

The *manner*, in which St. Paul proposes this truth, must not be forgotten; it is in the form of a *wish* or *prayer*. "May God give you an illumination of the eyes of your understanding!" Which shows the necessity and importance of grace, without which all the other mercies of God would be rather hurtful than profitable.

You may also remark the *circumstances* of *time* and *place;* for St. Paul wrote this epistle, when he was in prison at Rome, when he was loaded with chains, and when the gospel was every where persecuted. Under such forbidding circumstances, the Holy Ghost must needs display a mighty power in conversion.*

Secondly, to give an example of *propositions*, *including divers truths*, which must be distinguished from each other. We cannot choose a more proper text than the remaining part of the passage, which was just now explained. "That you may know," says St. Paul, "what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." The apostle's

* Out of these various methods of illustration Mr. Claude would have the preacher *choose the most proper*, and not attempt to crowd all into one sermon.

proposition is, That, by the illumination of grace, we understand the innumerable blessings, to the enjoyment of which God calls us by his gospel. Now this proposition includes many truths, which it will be necessary to distinguish.*

CHAP. VI.

OF TEXTS TO BE DISCUSSED BY WAY OF OBSERVATION.

Some texts require a discussion by way of consideration, or *observation.* The following hints may serve for a general direction.

1. When texts are *clear* of themselves, and the matter well known to the *hearers*, it would be trifling to amuse the people with *explication.* Such texts must be taken

* 1. The gospel is a *divine vocation;* "Awake thou that sleepest, &c."
The church is not a tumultuous assembly, &c. but a society which has God for its author—
2. A vocation in which God proposes something to our *hope.*
Not a vocation of mere *authority*, much less of *seduction* to sin—
But like that to Abraham, or to Lazarus—
3. This call proposes to our hopes an *Inheritance.*—
Not a recompense proportioned to our merit—
But a good bestowed in virtue of adopting grace—
4. This inheritance is a *heavenly* one; *in holy*, or *heavenly places*—
The apostle intends, not only the *nature* of the divine blessings, but also the *place* of possessing them—
5. These are blessings of infinite *abundance*, of inexpressible value—
"Riches of the glory;" a way of speaking proper to the Hebrews, and often used—
6. The apostle would have us *know* the admirable greatness of this hope—
All our deviations, and wrong attachments, arise from our ignorance of this glory—
7. The knowledge we have of this matter comes from *divine Illumination.*
Claude.

as they are, that is, clear, plain, and evident, and only observations should be made on them.

2. Most *historical* texts must be discussed in this way; for, in a way of explication, there would be very little to say. For example, what is there to *explain* in this passage? "Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper, and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them, that sat at table with him." John xii. Would it not be a loss of time and labour to attempt to *explain* these words; and are they not clearer than any comments can make them? the way of observation, then, must be taken.

3. There are some texts, which require *both* explication and observation, as when some parts may need explaining. For example, Acts i. 10. "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold! two men stood by them in white apparel." Here it will be necessary to explain in a few words the cause of their "looking stedfastly toward heaven;" for by lifting their eyes after their divine Master, they expressed the inward emotions of their minds. It will be needful also to explain this other expression, "as he went up," and to observe, that it must be taken in its plain, popular sense; and that it signifies not merely the removal of his visible presence, while he remained invisibly upon earth; but the absolute absence of his humanity. This is the natural sense of the words, and the observation is necessary to guard us against that sense, which the church of Rome imposes on them for the sake of transubstantiation. You may also briefly explain this other expression, "behold! two men," and show that they were Angels in human shapes. Here you may discuss the question of angelical

appearances under human forms. Notwithstanding these brief explications, this is a text, that must be discussed by way of observation.

Observe, in general, when explication and observation meet in one text, you must always explain the part, that needs explaining, before you make any observations; for observations must not be made, till you have established the sense plainly and clearly.

4. Sometimes an observation may be made by way of explication, as when you would infer something important from the meaning of an original term in the text. For example; Acts ii. 1. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place."

It will be proper here to explain and enforce the Greek word ομοθυμαδον, which is translated *with one accord*, for it signifies, that they had the same hope, the same opinions, the same judgment; and thus their unanimity is distinguished from an exterior, and negative agreement, which consists in a mere profession of having no different sentiments, and in not falling out; but this may proceed from negligence, ignorance, or fear of a tyrannical authority. The uniformity of which the church of Rome boasts, is of this kind; for if they have no disputes and quarrels among them on religious matters, (which however, is not granted,) it is owing to the stupidity and ignorance, in which the people are kept, or to that indifference and negligence, which the greatest part of that community discover towards religion, concerning which they seldom trouble themselves; or to the fear of that tyrannical domination of their prelates, with which the constitution of their church arms them. Now, consider such an uniformity how you will, it will

appear a false peace. If ignorance or negligence produce it, it resembles the quiet of dead carcases in a burying-ground, or the profound silence of night, when all are asleep; and, if it be owing to fear, it is the stillness of a galley-slave under the strokes of his officer, a mere shadow of acquiescence produced by timidity, and unworthy of the name of unanimity. The disciples of Jesus Christ were not uniform in this sense: but their unanimity was inward, and positive, they "were of one heart, and one soul." This explication, you perceive, is itself a very just observation, and there are very many passages of scripture, which may be treated of in the same manner.

5. Observations, for the most part, ought to be THEOLOGICAL, that is to say, they should belong to a system of religion. Sometimes, indeed we may make use of observations historical, philosophical, and critical; but these should be used sparingly, and seldom; on necessary occasions, and when they cannot well be avoided; and even then they ought to be pertinent, and not common, that they may be heard with satisfaction. Make it a law to be generally very brief on observations of these kinds, and to inform your audience, that you only make them *en passant.*

There are, I allow, some cases, in which observations remote from theology are necessary to the elucidating of a text. When these happen, make your observations professedly, and explain and prove them. But, I repeat it again, in general, observations should be purely theological; either speculative, which regard the mysteries of Christianity, or practical, which regard morality; for the pulpit was erected to instruct the minds of men in

religious subjects, and not to gratify curiosity; to inflame the heart, and not to find play for imagination.

6. Observations should not be proposed in scholastic style, nor in common-place guise. They should be seasoned with a sweet urbanity, accommodated to the capacities of the people, and adapted to the manners of good men.* One of the best expedients for this purpose is a reduction of obscure matters to a natural, popular, modern air. You can never attain this ability, unless you acquire a habit of conceiving clearly of subjects yourself, and of expressing them in a free, familiar, easy manner, remote from every thing forced, and far-fetched. All long trains of arguments, all embarrassments of divisions and subdivisions, all metaphysical investigations, which are mostly impertinent, and, like the fields, the cities, and the houses, which we imagine in the clouds, the mere creatures of fancy, all these should be avoided.

7. Care, however must be taken to avoid the opposite extreme, which consists in making only poor, dry, spiritless observations, frequently said under pretence of avoiding school-divinity, and of speaking only popular things. Endeavour to think clearly, and try also to think nobly. Let your observations be replete with beauty, as well as propriety, the fruits of a fine fancy under the

* *Urbanity* is opposed to *rusticity*, and that of which our author speaks, regards both the *subject* itself, and the *language*, in which it is expressed. In short, if urbanity be not in the *preacher*, it will never be in his *sermons*.

Ministers, who aim at this excellence, should remember, that there is such a thing as being *too familiar*. As to an *easy* manner also, there are two extremes. The formal *stiffness* of a pedant, and the *carelessness* of a man who does not respect his company, are both at a distance from Mr. CLAUDE'S *ease*. The ease of the *manner* of a christian preacher, in the pulpit, is not the ease of a man when *alone*, but of a well-bred man in *company*.

A subject is *far-fetched*, when, although it may have some connexion with the text, yet this connexion lies at a great distance, and obliges the preacher to go a long, long way to come at it. ROBINSON.

direction of a sober judgment. If you be inattentive to this article, you will pass for a contemptible declaimer, of mean and shallow capacity, exhausting yourself and not edifying your hearers; a very ridiculous character!

To open more particularly some sources of observations, remark every thing, that may help you to think, and facilitate invention;

I.

RISE FROM SPECIES TO GENUS.*

Psal. l. 14. "Sacrifice to God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most High." In discussing this text, I would observe first the terms, *sacrifice thanksgiving*, and would elucidate them by going from the species to the genus. The dignity of sacrifice *in general* would lead me to observe; that it is the immediate commerce of a creature with his God, an action, in which it is difficult to judge whether earth ascend to heaven, or heaven descend to earth; that in almost all the other acts of religion the creature receives of his Creator: but in this the Creator receives of his creature; that the Lord of the universe, who needs nothing, and who eternally lives in a rich abundance, hath such a condescension as to be willing to receive offering at our hands; that, of all dignities, that of the priesthood was the highest, for which reason the ancient priests dwelt in the tabernacle, or temple of God; that when God divided Canaan among the children of Israel, each tribe had its portion except that of Levi, to which God assigned nothing. Why? because he loved them less?

* This is a topic peculiarly proper in an exordium.

No, but because he gave them the priesthood, and because he, who had the priesthood, the altar, and the censer, had God for his portion, and consequently could have no need of temporal things. This is, you see, to rise from species to genus; for the text does not speak of sacrifice *in general*, but of the sacrifice of *praise* in particular; yet, when these general considerations are pertinent, they cannot fail of being well received.

II.

DESCEND FROM GENUS TO SPECIES.

An example may be taken from Psal. cxxiii. 2. "Behold! as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God." Here you may aptly observe in masters with regard to servants, and in God with regard to us, three senses of the phrase. There is a hand of *beneficence*, a hand of *protection* or deliverence, and a hand of *correction*. A servant expects favours from the hand of his master, not from that of a stranger. He looks to him for protection and deliverence in threatening dangers, and refuses all help, except that of his master. He expects correction from him, when he commits a fault, and, when corrected, humbles himself under his master's frown, in order to disarm him by tears of repentance. The application of these to the servants of God is easy. The word *succour* is general, and may very well be considered by descending from the genus to the species, and by observing the different occasions, which we have for divine assistance, and, consequently, the different assistances and succours, which God affords us; as the help of his *word* to remove our ignorance, doubts, or errors; the

help of his *providence* to deliver us out of afflictions; the help of his *grace* and spirit to guard us from the temptations of the world, and to aid us against the weaknesses of nature; the help of divine *consolations* to sweeten the bitterness of our exercises under distressing circumstances, and to give us courage to bear afflictions; the help of his *mercy* to pardon our sins, and to restore to our consciences that tranquility, which they have lost by offending God. You will meet with a great number of texts which may be discussed in this manner; but great care must be taken not to strain the subject; for that would make you look like a school-boy. The best way is to make only one general observation, and then to apply it to several particular subjects, collecting all at last into one general point of view.

III.

REMARK THE DIVERS CHARACTERS OF A VICE, WHICH IS FORBIDDEN, OR OF A VIRTUE, WHICH IS COMMANDED.*

You might easily take the characters of *vices* from this pattern of characterising virtues; however, I will

* For example, 2 Thess. iii. 5. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." Begin with the *characters* of true *love* to God. The seat of it is the *heart;* it possesses the *whole* heart; and though it is not alone, it holds the *chief place;* its emotions and acts are *infinite*, without measure or subordination, without bounds or partition; but *sets bounds* to every emotion towards other objects; is accompanied with *humility* and *fear;* principally consists in *obedience;* is inflamed under the rod of *correction;* and is not *superstitious.*—It is tranquil and *peaceable;* yet always *active;* and finally, one of the greatest evidences of love to God is, *spontaneous* obedience, not waiting for chastisements to awake us, after we have fallen into sin. So much for the *characters* of love.

Then subjoin the emotions included in the words, "patient waiting." On which, remark, That the coming of Jesus Christ being the subject in question, the expectation of a believer is a true and real *hope*, accompanied with an holy

add an example on *avarice*, taking for a text Heb. xiii. 5. "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have."

1. Avarice is a disposition so gross, that it *obscures* the understanding and *reason* of a man, even so far as to make him think of profit, where there is nothing but loss, and imagine that to be economy, which is nothing but ruin. Is it not in this manner, that a covetous man, instead of preventing maladies by an honest and frugal expense, draws them upon himself by a sordid and niggardly way of living; and by this means brings himself under an unavoidable necessity of consuming one part of his substance to recover a health, which, by an excessive parsimony, he has lost? There are even some, who bring inevitable death upon themselves, rather than spend any thing to procure necessary relief, and are impertinent enough to imagine that riches had better be without a possessor, than a possessor without riches; as if man were made for money, and not money for man.

But, 2dly, this would be but little, if avarice affected only the avaricious themselves; it goes much farther, it renders a man *useless to society.* It subverts the idea of our living to assist one another; for a covetous man is useless to the whole world. He resembles that *earth*, of which St. Paul speaks, which "drinketh in the rain, that comes often upon it, and beareth only thorns and briars." He is an unfruitful tree; a gulf, which draws in waters from all parts; but from which no stream runs: or, if you will, an avaricious man is like death,

and ardent *desire*, as being an expectation of the greatest blessings, and an *holy inquietude*, almost like what we feel when we expect an intimate friend; but this inquietude does not hinder us from *possessing our souls in patience*—and finally, it necessarily includes a holy preparation. CLAUDE.

that devours all, and restores nothing; whence it comes to pass, that no man is in general so much despised, while he lives, as a miser, and no man's death is so much desired as his. He never opens his treasures, till he is leaving the world; he therefore can never receive the fruits of gratitude, because his favours are never conferred till his death.

3d. Farther, this vice not only renders a man useless to society; but it even makes him hurtful and *pernicious* to it. There is no right so inviolable, no law so holy, which he will not violate greedily to amass riches, and cautiously to preserve them. How many violent incroachments! how many criminal designs! how many dark and treasonable practices! how many infamies and wickednesses have proceeded from this perverse inclination. If a covetous man is barren in kindnesses, he is fruitful in sins and iniquities. There are no boundaries, which he cannot pass, no barriers which he cannot readily go over to satisfy his base passions for money.

4th. By this we may already perceive how *incompatible* this vice is with true faith, and *with the genius of Christianity.* The spirit of christianity is a spirit of love and charity, always beneficent, always ready to prevent the necessities of our christian brethren, kind and full of compassion, inquiring into the wants of others, and, without asking, seeking means to prevent them. But avarice, on the contrary, makes a man hard, cruel, pitiless, beyond the reach of complaints and tears, rendering the miser not only jealous of the prosperity of his neighbour; but even making him consider the pittances of the miserable as objects of his covetous desires.

5th. It is not without reason, that St. Paul calls av-

arice, *idolatry;* for one of the principal characters of this cursed inclination is a making gold and silver one's God. It is money, in effect, which the covetous adores, it is this that he supremely loves, this he prefers above all other things, it is his last end, his life, his confidence, and all his happiness. He, who fears God, consecrates to him his first thoughts, and devotes to his glory and service the chief of his cares, to his interests the whole of his heart, and for the rest commits himself to the care of his providence. It is the same with a covetous man in regard to his treasures, he thinks only of them, he labours only to increase and preserve them, he feels only for them, he has neither rest, nor hope, which is not founded on his riches; he would offer incense to them, could he do it without expense.

6th. It is surprising, and sometimes sufficiently diverting, to see in what manner all the other inclinations of a miser, good and bad, virtues and vices, his love and his hatred, his joy and his sorrow respect and obey his avarice. They move or rest, act or do not act, agreeably to the orders which this criminal passion gives them. If he be naturally civil, mild, and agreeable in his conversation, he will not fail to lay aside all his civilities, and good manners, when his avarice tells him he may get something by doing so; and, on the contrary, when he has received some injury, when some insult has been offered him, which is a just ground of resentment, you may see in an instant his wrath is removed, and all his vehemence abated, in hope of a little money offered to appease him, or in fear of a small expense to gratify his resentment. If an object of public joy, or sorrow offer itself to his view, simply considering it in a general view, he will be glad or sorry according to the nature of the

thing in question: but should this occasion of public joy interest him ever so little, or in any manner prejudice his pretensions, all on a sudden you will see all his joy turned into sorrow. In like manner, when a public calamity gives him an opportunity of gaining any thing, all his sorrow is turned into joy. If he ardently loves any one, he will love him no longer if he begin to cost him any thing; avarice will turn all his love into indifference and coldness. If reason and common honesty oblige him to be of a party, who have justice on their side, he will maintain and even exaggerate their rights, and defend the equity of them, while his purse is not engaged; engage his purse, and it is no longer the same thing; what was just is become now unjust to him; he has quickly *whys*, and *howevers* in his mouth—but, *however*, we were mistaken in such a point—*why* should we be obstinate in such, or such a thing? &c.

IV.

OBSERVE THE RELATION OF ONE SUBJECT TO ANOTHER.

For example, always when in scripture God is called a *Father*, the relation of that term to *children* is evident, and we are obliged not only to remark the paternal inclinations, which are in God towards us, and the advantages, which we receive from his love, but also the duties to which we are bound as children of such a father. The same may be said of all these expressions of scripture, *God is our God*, we are *his people;* he is our *portion*, we are his *heritage;* he is our *master*, we are his *servants;* he is our *king*, we are the *subjects of his king-*

dom ; he is our *prophet* or *teacher*, we are his *disciples ;* with many more of the same kind. When we meet with such single and separate, they must be discussed in relation to one another, and this relation must be particularly considered. Thus, when the *kingdom* of God, or of Jesus Christ, is spoken of, all things relative to this kingdom must be considered; as, its laws; arms; throne; crown; subjects; extent of dominion; palace where the king resides; &c. So when our mystical *marriage* with Jesus Christ is spoken of, whether it be where he is called a bridegroom, or his church a bride, you should, after you have explained these expressions, turn your attention to relative things; as the love of Jesus Christ to us, which made him consent to this mystical marriage; the dowry, that we bring him, our sins and miseries; the communication, which he makes to us both of his name and benefits; the rest, that he grants us in his house, changing our abode; the banquet at his divine nuptials; the inviolable fidelity, which he requires of us; the right and power he acquires over us; the defence and protection, which he engages to afford us; but, when these relative things are discussed, great care must be taken neither to insist on them too much, nor to descend to mean ideas, nor even to treat of them one after another in form of a parallel; for nothing is more tiresome, than treating these apart, and one after another. They must, then, be associated together; a body composed of many images must be formed; and the whole must be always animated with the sensible, and the spiritual.

V.

OBSERVE WHETHER SOME THINGS BE NOT SUPPOSED, WHICH ARE NOT EXPRESSED.

This is a source of invention different from the former; for the former is confined to things really relative; but this speaks in general of things *supposed*, which have no relation to each other. For example, when we speak of a change, what they call the terminus *a quo* necessarily supposes the terminus *ad quem:* and the terminus *ad quem* supposes the terminus *a quo.*

A covenant supposes two contracting parties; a reconciliation effected, or a peace made, supposes war and enmity; a victory supposes enemies, arms, and a combat; life supposes death, and death life; the day supposes night, and the night day; sometimes there are propositions, which necessarily suppose others, either because they are consequences, depending on their principles, or because they are truths naturally connected with others. It is always very important to understand well what things are supposed in a text; for sometimes several useful considerations may be drawn from them, and not unfrequently the very expressions in the text include them.

For example. Rom. xii. 17: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. In discussing this text you may very properly observe the truths, which are *implied*, or supposed in the words; as 1. The *disorder* into which sin has thrown mankind, so that men are exposed to receive

injuries and insults from each other. A society of sinners is only a shadow of society; they are actually at war with each other, and, like the Midianitish army, turning every one his sword against his companion. The spirit of the world is a spirit of dispersion rather than of association. Different interests, diversities of sentiments, varieties of opinions, contrarieties of passions make a perpetual division, and the fruits of this division are insults and injuries. It may be said of each in such societies, as of Ishmael in the prophecy, "his hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him."

2. We must not imagine that faith, and the dignity of a christian calling raise the *disciple of Christ* above injuries; on the contrary, they expose him oftener to evils than others; as well because God himself will have our faith tried, that we may arrive at heaven *through many tribulations*, as because a christian profession necessarily divides believers from infidels. The world and sin form a kind of communion between the wicked and worldly, which produces a mutual forbearance and friendship: but there is no communion between a believer and an unbeliever, any more than between light and darkness, Christ and Belial. Thence come all the persecutions of the church, and thence will good men continue to meet with opposition from the wicked to the end of time. Jesus Christ, when he sent his apostles, did not fail to apprise them of this; he said, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:" and again, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

You may make an observation on each of these supposed truths; and, having established the apostle's pre-

cept, by showing that private revenge is contrary to the laws of Christianity, and incompatible with true piety, you may observe a third supposed truth.

3. That the gospel not only forbids resentment and revenge; it even commands us to *pardon* offences; and, farther, obligeth us to *do good* to our enemies, and to *pray* for our persecutors, according to the precepts of Jesus Christ, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you:" and according to the doctrine of St. Paul in another place, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."

It remains that you take care in treating supposed truths,

1st, Not to *fetch* them too *far*, or to bring them about by long circuits of reasoning. Avoid this for two reasons; first, because you would render your discourse *obscure* by it; for every body is not capable of seeing truths, which are very distant from the text: and, secondly, because by this means you might bring in *all* the whole body of divinity into your text; which attempt would be vicious, and contrary to the rules of good sense. Of supposed truths, you must choose the most *natural*, and those which lie nearest the text.*

In the 2d place, do not *enlarge* on implied truths: it is proper, indeed, that hearers should know them; but they are not principal articles.

* Thus Bishop FLETCHER, in a sermon concerning the rich man, who said, Luke xii. 18. "I will pull down my barns," &c. "The rich man does not propose to employ his fortune in *faction;* he does not intend to increase his estate by encroaching on his neighbours; nor to get richer by extortion and *usury;* he does not mean to trouble and *persecute* good people, who do not live as he doth; nor does he design so give himself up to sordid *avarice*, or to ostentation and *pomp;* only, *Soul, take thine ease.*" ROBINSON.

And, 3dly, take care also that these supposed things be *important*, either for instruction in general, or for casting light particularly on the text, or for consolation, or for the correction of vice, or practice of piety, or some useful purpose; otherwise you would deliver trifling impertinences under the name of implied truths.

VI.

REFLECT ON THE PERSON SPEAKING OR ACTING.

For an example, let us take the last-mentioned text of St. Paul, "recompense to no man evil for evil. Here you may very pertinently remark, 1. That this precept is more beautiful in the mouth of St. Paul, than it could have been in that of any other man. The reason is this; he of all the men in the world had the greatest reason for resentment upon worldly principles; for never was there a man more persecuted, never a man more unjustly persecuted than he; he was persecuted by his own countrymen the Jews, persecuted by the Gentiles, persecuted by false brethren, persecuted by false apostles, persecuted when he preached the gospel, persecuted even by those, for whose salvation he was labouring, persecuted to prison, to banishment, to bonds, to blood; how amiable, then, is such a precept in the mouth of such a man! How forcible is such a precept, supported by one of the greatest examples we can conceive! by the example of a man whose interest seems to dictate a quite contrary practice! When we give such precepts to the worldly, they never fail to say to us, Yes, yes! you talk finely! you have never been insulted as we have! had you met with what we have, you would talk otherwise!

But there is no reason to say so to St. Paul, any more than to Jesus Christ, his master, the author of this divine morality; for who was ever so persecuted as Jesus Christ? and, after him, who suffered more than his servant St. Paul?

2. You may also very properly remark, that, to take a different view of the apostle Paul, no man was more obliged to teach and love such a morality than *himself.* Why? Because of all those, whom God in his ineffable mercy had called to the knowledge of the truth, he had been the most concerned in cruel efforts of rage against God and his church; all inflamed with fury he went from Jerusalem to Damascus, to ravage the flock of Jesus Christ. In this raging violence of his hatred, God made him feel his love, pardoned his sins, softened his heart, and from heaven cried to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Who, then, could be more obliged to preach mercy than this man, to whom God had showed so much mercy? Might he not say, when he gave these rules of morality, what he said on another subject, "I have received of the Lord that, which I deliver unto you;" I have received the same mercy, which I teach you. Add to this, the apostle had not only met with pardoning love to an enemy on God's part, but he had also experienced it from the *church.* Far from rendering him evil for evil, far from avenging his persecutions, the disciples of Christ reached out the arms of their love to him, received him into their communion, and numbered him with the apostles of Jesus Christ.

VII.

REFLECT ON THE STATE OF THE PERSONS SPEAKING OR ACTING.

Thus in explaining 1. Thess. v. 16. *Rejoice evermore*, you must not fail to consider the state of St. Paul, when he wrote that epistle; for he was at Athens, engaged in that superstitious city, where, as it is said in the xvii. of Acts, his spirit was "stirred in him," observing "the city wholly given to idolatry;" where he was treated as a "babbler, a setter forth of strange gods," and where, in short, he was the object of Athenian ridicule and raillery. Yet, amid so many just causes of grief, he exhorts the Thessalonians always to preserve their spiritual joy; not that he meant to render them insensible to the evils, which he suffered, nor to the afflictions of the new-born church; but because our spiritual afflictions, I mean those, which we suffer for the glory of God, and the good of his church, are not incompatible with peace and joy of conscience: on the contrary, it is particularly in these afflictions that God gives the most lively joys, because then he bestows on his children more abundant measures of his grace, and more intimate communion with himself. Moreover, on these sad occasions we generally become better acquainted with the providence of God, we feel an assurance that nothing happens without his order, and that, happen what will, "all things work together for good to them that love God." This gives us true rest, a joy which nothing is capable of disturbing.

VIII.

REMARK THE TIME OF A WORD OR ACTION.

For example, St. Paul in his first epistle to Timothy requires, that in the public services of the church prayers should be made for *all men;* but "first for kings, and for those that were in authority." Here it is very natural to remark the time. It was when the church and the apostles were every where persecuted; when the faithful were the objects of the hatred and calumny of all mankind, and in particular of the cruelty of these Tyrants. Yet none of this rough treatment could stop the course of Christian charity. St. Paul not only requires every believer to pray for all men; but he would have it done in *public*, that all the world might know the maxims of Christianity, always kind, patient, and benevolent. Believers consider themselves as bound in duty to all men, though men do nothing to oblige them to it. He was aware, malicious slanderers would call this worldly policy and human prudence, and would say, Christians only meant to flatter the great, and to court their favour; yet even this calumny does not prevent St. Paul; he orders them to pray *publicly*, and *first* for civil governors. We ought always to discharge our duty, and, for the rest, submit to the unjust accounts that men give of our conduct.

IX.

OBSERVE PLACE.

St. Paul says to the Philippians, "forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those

things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The place, where he writes this, furnishes a very beautiful consideration. He was then in *prison*, at Rome, loaded with chains, and deprived of his liberty; yet he speaks as if he were as much at liberty as any man in the world; as able to act as he pleased, and to dispose of himself as ever: he talks of having entered a course, running a race, forgetting things behind, pressing toward those that were before, and, in short, of hoping to gain a prize; all these are actions of a man enjoying full liberty. How could he, who was in a prison, be at the same time on a race-course? how could he run, who was loaded with irons? how could he hope to win a prize, who every day expected a sentence of death? But it is not difficult to reconcile these things: his bonds and imprisonment did not hinder the course of his faith and obedience. His prison was converted into an agreeable Stadium, and death for the Gospel might well be considered under the image of a complete victory; for a Martyr gains an unfading crown as a reward of his sufferings.

X.

CONSIDER THE PERSONS ADDRESSED.

Let us again take St. Paul's words for an example. "Recompense to no man evil for evil," Rom. xii. 17. They, to whom the apostle addressed these words, were *Romans*, whose perpetual maxim was violently to revenge public injuries, and totally to destroy those, who intended to destroy them, or had offered them any affronts; witness the Carthagenians and Corinthians. They totally destroyed Carthage, because she had carried her

arms into Italy by Hannibal's means, and had been upon the point of ruining Rome. Corinth they sacked and burnt for having affronted their ambassadors. You may also remark this particular circumstance; that, although the Romans had succeeded in avenging their injuries, and the empire owed its grandeur to such excesses, yet their success did not hinder the apostle from saying, "Recompense to no man evil for evil;" because neither examples nor successes ought to be the rules of our conduct, but solely the will of God, and the law of Christianity.

XI.

EXAMINE THE PARTICULAR STATE OF PERSONS ADDRESSED.

For example, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." St. Paul writes to Romans; but to Roman *Christians*, who saw themselves hated and persecuted by their fellow-citizens, and in general abused by the whole world. Yet, however reasonable resentment might appear at first sight, the apostle would not have them obey such passions as the light of reason, the instinct of nature, and the desire of their own preservation might seem to excite: he exhorted them to leave vengeance to God, and advised them only to follow the dictates of love. The greatest persecutors of the primitive Christians were the Jews, on whom the Roman Christians could easily have avenged themselves under various pretexts; for the Jews were generally hated and despised by all other nations, and nothing could be easier than to avail themselves of that public hatred, to which the religion of the Jews exposed them. Neverthelsss, St. Paul not only says in general, "Render not evil for evil;" but in partic-

ular, Recompense to *no man* evil for evil. As if he had said, Do not injure those, on whom you could most easily avenge yourselves; hurt not the most violent enemies of the name of Jesus Christ, and of the christian profession; not even those, who have crucified your Saviour, and every day strive to destroy his gospel.

XII.

CONSIDER THE PRINCIPLES OF A WORD OR ACTION.

For example, John v. 14. "Behold! thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." This was the language of Jesus Christ to the man whom he had just before healed of an infirmity of thirty-eight years' standing. Him Jesus now found in the temple. It is not imaginable that this meeting was fortuitous, and unforeseen to Jesus Christ; his providence, no doubt, conducted the man that way, directed him to the temple, whither he himself went to seek him. Examine then, upon what *principles* Jesus Christ went to seek this miserable sinner.

In like manner, if you had to examine these words of Jesus Christ to the Samaritan woman, "Go, and call thy husband," John iv. You might examine the intention of Jesus Christ in this expression. He did not speak thus, because he was ignorant what sort of a life this woman lived; he knew that, to speak properly, she had no husband. It was then, 1. A word of *trial;* for the Lord said this to give her an opportunity of making a free confession, *I have no husband.* 2. It was also a word of *kind reproof;* for he intended to convince her of the sin in which she lived. 3. It was also a word of *grace;* for the censure tended to the woman's consolation. 4.

It was farther, a word of *wisdom ;* for our Lord intended to take occasion at this meeting to discover himself to her, and more clearly to convince her, that he had a perfect knowledge of all the secrets of her life, as he presently proved by saying, " Thou hast well said, I have no husband ; for thou hast had five husbands, and he, whom thou hast now, is not thy husband.

Were you going to explain the ninth verse of the first of Acts, where it is said, " When Jesus was taken up, his disciples beheld him," it would be proper to remark the sentiments of the disciples in that moment, and to show from what principles proceeded that attentive and earnest looking after their divine Master, while he ascended to heaven.

XIII.

CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES.

Thus, when you explain the doctrine of God's mercy, it is expedient (at least sometimes) to remark the *good* and lawful uses, which we ought to make of it. These uses are, to renounce ourselves ; to be sensible of our infinite obligations to God, who pardons so many sins with so much bounty ; to consecrate ourselves entirely to his service, as persons over whom he has acquired a new right ; and to labour incessantly for his glory, in gratitude for what he has done for our salvation.

You may also observe the false and pernicious consequences, which ungrateful and wicked men, who sin that grace may abound, pretend to derive from this doctrine. They say, we are no longer to consider justice now we are under grace ; the more we sin, the more

God will be glorified in pardoning us; this mercy will endure all the time of our lives; and therefore it will be enough to apply to it at the hour of death; with many more such false consequences, which must be both clearly stated, and fully refuted.

It is much the same with the doctrine of the efficacious grace of the Holy Ghost in our conversion; for the just and lawful consequences, which are drawn from it are, 1. That such is the greatness of our depravity, it can be rectified only by almighty aid. 2. That we should be humble, because there is nothing good in us. 3. That we should ascribe all the glory of our salvation to God, who is the only author of it. 4. That we must adore the depths of the great mercy of our God, who freely gave his Holy Spirit to convert us.

You must remark at the same time the abuses, and false consequences, which insidious sophisters draw from this doctrine, as that, since the conversion of men is by the almighty power of God, it is needless to preach his word; and to address to them on God's part exhortations, promises and threatenings; that it is in vain to tell a sinner, it is his duty to turn to God, as without efficacious grace (which does not depend upon the sinner) he cannot do it; that it has a tendency to make men negligent about their salvation to tell them, it does not depend on their power. These, and such like abuses, must be proposed and solidly refuted.

Moreover, this method must be taken, when you have occasion to treat of the doctrines of election and reprobation; the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ's blood; and, in general, almost all religious subjects require it; for there is not one of them all, which is not subject to use and abuse. Take care, however, when you propose

these good and bad consequences, that you do it properly, and when an occasion naturally presents itself; for were they introduced with any kind of affectation and force, it must be disagreeable.

XIV.

REFLECT ON THE END PROPOSED IN AN EXPRESSION OR AN ACTION.

Although this is not very different from the way of principles, of which we have already spoken, yet it may afford a variety in discussing them.

If, for example, you were speaking of justification, in the sense in which St. Paul taught it, you must observe the *ends*, which the apostle proposed, as 1. To put a just difference between Jesus Christ and Moses, the law and the gospel, and to show against those, who would blend them together, and so confound both in one body of religion, that they cannot be so united. 2. To preserve men from that pharisaical pride, which reigned among the Jews, *who sought to establish their own righteousness, and not the righteousness of God.* 3. To take away such inadequate remedies as the law by way of shadow exhibited for the expiation of sins; as sacrifices and purifications; as well as those, which pagan superstition proposed, such as washing in spring water, offering victims to their gods, &c. 4. To bring men to the true and only atonement for sin, which is the blood of Jesus Christ.

XV.

CONSIDER WHETHER THERE BE ANY THING REMARKABLE IN THE MANNER OF THE SPEECH OR ACTION.

For example. "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Rom. viii. 37. You may remark, that there is a more than ordinary force in these words, *more than conquerors;* for they express an heroical triumph. He does not simply say, We bear our trials with patience; he not only says, We shall conquer in this conflict; but he affirms, *We are more than conquerors.* It is much that faith resists trials without being oppressed; it is more to conquer these trials after a rude combat; but to affirm the believer shall be *more than a conqueror*, is as much as to say, he shall conquer without a combat, and triumph without resistance; it is as much as to say, he shall make trials the matter of his joy and glory, as the apostle says, *we glory in tribulation*, considering them not as afflictions and sorrows, but as divine honours and favours. This was also the apostle's mind, when he wrote to the Philippians, "unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." He considers sufferings as gifts of the liberality of God, for which the faithful are obliged to be thankful. So in this other passage, "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." You may here remark the heroism and magnanimity of St. Paul,

His faith seems to defy all the powers of nature. He assembles them all—*life*, *death*, *angels*, &c. to triumph over them, and to exult in their defeat. This language marks a full persuasion of the favour of God, and an invincible confidence in his love.

Such remarks as these may be made upon many expressions of Jesus Christ, wherein are discovered dignity and majesty, which cannot belong to any mere creature: as when he says, "Before Abraham was, I am." "While I am in the world I am the light of the world." "All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." There are many passages of the same kind.

XVI.

COMPARE WORDS AND ACTIONS WITH SIMILAR WORDS AND ACTIONS.

The Evangelist speaks of "the things, that Jesus began to do and to teach," Acts i. 1. Now he says the same of Moses, "he was mighty in words and in deeds," Acts vii. 22. Here you may observe, that these two things joined together, *doing and teaching*, are distinguishing characters of a true prophet, who never separates practice from doctrine. You may then make an edifying comparison between Moses and Jesus Christ; both *did* and *taught*; but there was a great difference between the *teaching* of one and that of the other. One taught justice, the other mercy; one abased, the other exalted; one terrified, the other comforted. There was also a great difference between the *deeds* of the one, and those of the other. Most of the miracles

of Moses were miracles of *destruction*, insects, frogs, hail, and others of the same kind, with which he chastised the Egyptians. But the miracles of Jesus Christ were always miracles of *benevolence*, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, &c.

So again, when the infidelity of the Jews in rejecting the Messiah is discussed, you may examine their prejudices and their maxims, as they are narrated in the gospel; and these you may compare with those of the church of Rome in rejecting the reformation; for they are very much alike.

So again, when you consider St. Paul's answers to the objections of the Jews, who pleaded that they were the people of God, and that his covenant belonged to Abraham and his posterity; you may observe, that these answers are like ours to the Roman church, when they affirm they are the church of God. As the apostle distinguisheth two Israels, one after the flesh, and the other after the spirit, so we distinguish two churches; one, which is only so in outward profession before men, possessing the pulpits, the churches, and the schools; and the other, which is the church in the sight of God, having a holy doctrine, and a lively faith. These answer precisely to the apostle's "Israel after the flesh, and Israel after the spirit." As the apostle applies the promises of God, and their accomplishment, not to Israel after the flesh, but to the Israelites after the spirit, so we also apply the promises, which God has made to his church, not to those, who occupy the pulpits, the churches, and the schools; but to them who believe and practise the pure doctrine of the gospel. As St. Paul defines the true people of God to be those, whom God by his electing love hath taken

from among men, so we define the true church by the same electing grace; maintaining that the Lord has made all the excellent promises, with which scripture abounds, to his elect only, and that his elect are such as he has chosen according to his good pleasure, without any regard to particular places, conditions, or qualifications among men.

XVII.

REMARK THE DIFFERENCES OF WORDS AND ACTIONS ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS.

When a weak scrupulosity, or a tenderness of conscience was in question, which put some of the faithful upon eating only herbs, St. Paul exhorted the strong to bear the infirmities of the weak; "let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him, which eateth not, judge him that eateth; for God hath received him." Rom. xiv. 3. But when the same St. Paul speaks of false teachers, who wanted to impose a yoke on conscience, and who under pretext of meats and days were attempting to join Moses with Jesus Christ, as if Christians were yet obliged to observe the ceremonial law; then the apostle has no patience with them, but condemns and anathematises them, as people who preached another gospel, and exhorts the faithful to "stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. v. 1.

So again, when you find in the gospel, that Jesus Christ sometimes forbade his disciples to publish the miracles that he wrought, and to declare his divinity;

and, at other times, that he ordered them to publish upon the *house-tops* what they had *heard in private*, and to preach to *all nations* the mysteries of his kingdom, you must remark, that this difference is owing to different occasions. While Jesus Christ was upon earth, the mysteries of his kingdom were covered with the veil of his humiliation, it being necessary in some sense to conceal them; but after his exaltation, it became proper to publish them to the whole earth.

The same diversity may be remarked in what the Lord Jesus said to the Canaanitish woman; that he was "only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and that it was "not meet to give the children's bread to dogs." This seems contrary to an almost infinite number of passages of scripture, which affirm, Jesus Christ is "the light of the Gentiles; to him shall the gathering of the people be." These, and all other such passages will perfectly agree, if you distinguish time and occasion. While Jesus Christ was upon earth, he was *the minister of the circumcision*, as St. Paul speaks, that is, his personal, ministerial commission was only to the Jews: but when he was exalted to glory, his ministry extended over the whole earth.

XVIII.

CONTRAST WORDS AND ACTIONS.

Thus you may oppose the agonies and terrors, which seized Jesus Christ at the approach of death, against the constancy and joy of the martyrs, who flew to martyrdom as to a victory. This contrariety of emotions is accounted for by the difference of the persons. Jesus

Christ was the Mediator of men towards God, bearing their sins, and engaging with the eternal justice of his Father: but the martyrs were believers, reconciled to God, fighting under Christ's banner, and as mystical soldiers maintaining his righteous claims. One was filled with a sense of God's wrath against men: the others were filled with a sense of his love. Christ met death as an armed enemy, and as one who, till that time, had a right to triumph over mankind; but martyrs approached him as a vanquished enemy, or rather as an enemy reconciled, who having changed his nature was become more favourable to men. In one word, Jesus Christ was at war with death: whereas, death was at peace and in friendship with the martyrs.

In general, we may affirm, that contrast is one of the most beautiful topics of Christian rhetoric; and that which furnishes the most striking illustrations. Great care, however, must be taken, that the oppositions be natural, easy to comprehend, and properly placed in a full, clear light.

XIX.

EXAMINE THE GROUNDS, OR CAUSES OF AN ACTION OR AN EXPRESSION; AND SHOW THE TRUTH OR EQUITY OF IT.

For example. When the *incarnation* of Jesus Christ is in question, as in this text, *the word was made flesh*, you may recur to the foundations of this truth, as revealed in scripture, in order to show that a divine person did take upon him real, true humanity, in opposition to the notions of some ancient heretics, who imagined that the human nature of Christ was only apparent. For this

purpose, you must look into the ancient prophecies for such passages as attribute two natures, the human and divine, to the one person of the Messiah. To the same purpose you may also apply New Testament texts, which speak of the same subject; and you may farther observe such reasons of this singular economy, as theology furnisheth, and which are taken from the design of our salvation.

In like manner, when you treat of the *resurrection* of Christ, or his *ascension* to heaven, you must take this topic, and show the fidelity and credibility of the testimony borne by his apostles. Your argument may be established by observing what followed his resurrection and ascension; as the effusion of the Spirit, the abolition of the empire of the devil and his idols, the conversion of whole nations to the worship of the one true God, miracles, prophecies, &c.

The same method is proper, when some *predictions* are your subjects; as the destruction of Jerusalem, and the rejection of the Jews: for you may either narrate history to show the *execution*, or you may reason upon the subject to show how wonderful the divine *wisdom* was in that dispensation: the whole will evince the truth of the predictions.

I said also, the grounds and causes of an action or expression might be examined, to *show the equity and truth* of either.* This principally takes place, when any thing

* Thus MASSILLON persuades to a life of piety, though accompanied with many disgustful circumstances; John x. 31. "Then the Jews took up stones to stone him." These were the returns of gratitude which Jesus Christ received of men; these the consolations with which heaven permitted him to be exercised in the painful course of his ministry. At one time they treated him as a Samaritan, as one that had a devil; at another "they took up stones to stone him." And thus the Son of God passed the whole time of his life, always exposed to the most

surprising and uncommon is in question; for such things at first seem to shock the minds of auditors; or when you are pressing home an exhortation to the practice of any duty, which cannot be performed without difficulty. For example. The Pharisees complain in the gospel, that the disciples of Christ did *not keep the traditions of the elders.* In order to justify the disciples, show the foundations of Christian liberty, and remark, that the true worship of God does not consist in the observation of external ceremonies, much less in the observation of human traditions and customs: but it consists of true piety, real inward holiness, and actual obedience to the commandments of God.

So again, when Jesus Christ, after he had healed the paralytic man, commanded him to "sin no more, lest a worse thing should come unto him." You must go to the grounds of the expression, to show its equity. Now these are, that some sins had drawn the wrath of God upon him before—that, if he continued in them, that wrath would certainly return—that the favours, which we receive from God, engage us to glorify him by good works, &c. This topic is of great use in explaining the

obstinate contradictions, meeting with almost none but such as were insensible of his benefit, and rebellious against his preaching; and all this without his letting fall the least sign of impatience, or the least complaint.

But must I add? We, my brethren! we his members and disciples, alas! the smallest disgusts, the least oppositions we meet with, in the practice of piety, offend our delicacy! Nothing is to be heard but complaining and murmuring, when we cease to taste those pleasing attractions, which render duty a delight. Tossed and distressed, we are almost tempted to abandon God, and return to the world, as to a gentler and more convenient master; in short, we would have nothing but comforts and pleasures in the service of God!

But we ought to abide in a course of obedience, though we do meet with disgusts; Because,--disgusts are inevitable in *this life;* those of *piety* are not so bitter as we imagine; they are less than those of the *world;* and, lastly, let them be as great as they may, pious people have *resources* which worldlings have not.

MASSILLON.

commandments of the law, the equity of which must be made to appear; for it must be proved, that they are all founded in nature, and have an inviolable fitness in the order of things.

In short, it is proper to take this method with all exhortations to piety, charity, &c. which are found in scripture. In order to persuade people to the practice of them, their fitness must be showed, by opening the grounds, reasons, and principles of our obligations to the practice of all these virtues.

XX.

REMARK THE GOOD AND BAD IN EXPRESSIONS AND ACTIONS.

This topic is of very great use in explaining the histories recorded in the gospel, where you will frequently find actions and words, which may be called *mixed;* because, in general, they proceed from some good principles, and, in particular, they have a good deal of weakness and infirmity in them. If you would explain Matt. xvi. 22. "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee;" you may observe what there is good and what bad in this expression of St. Peter. 1. You see herein his *love* to his master; for his not being able to bear the discourse of Jesus Christ concerning his sufferings at Jerusalem could only proceed from his ardent affection to him. 2. Herein appears not that cold and lukewarm regard, which most men have for one another, but a most *lively* affection, interesting him for his master, an affection full of tenderness, which could not even

bear to hear a word, or entertain a thought about the death of Jesus Christ. 3. You may observe an *honest freedom*, which put him upon freely addressing Jesus Christ himself, using that familiar access, which his condescension allowed his disciples, without a mixture of mean and despicable timidity. 4. You see, in fine, a strong *faith* in his master's power, as by addressing him he seems persuaded, that it depended only on himself to suffer or not to suffer; "Lord, be it far from thee, this shall not be unto thee." Now, all these are *good* dispositions. Here follow the *bad* ones. 1. Peter discovers gross *ignorance* of the ways of divine wisdom in sending Jesus Christ into the world; for he does not seem yet to know, that Jesus Christ must needs suffer; and with this ignorance the Lord reproaches him in the next verse, "Thou savourest not the things, which are of God; but those, which are of men." 2. His love to his master had something merely human and *carnal* in it, since he only considered the preservation of his temporal life, and concerned himself only about his body, instead of elevating his mind to that superior glory of Jesus Christ, which was to follow his sufferings, or considering the great work of man's salvation, to perform which he came into the world. 3. You may also remark a troublesome and criminal *boldness*. He means to be wiser than Jesus Christ. "Peter took him," says the evangelist, "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee." Rash attempt! as if Peter were called into the counsel of God and Jesus Christ his Son, to give his opinion concerning this grand affair. 4. It even seems as if Peter, hearing Christ speak of his sufferings, imagined, this discourse proceeded only from his fear of death, and from a mean timidity; for he aims to encourage and comfort him as

we do persons whose fears exceed the bounds of reason. "Lord!" says he, "be it far from thee, this shall not be to thee;" as if he had said to him, Do not afflict yourself, your apprehensions of death are groundless, nothing of this is like to happen to you.

XXI.

SUPPOSE THINGS.

This topic is principally used in controversy. For example: When you are speaking of the merit of good works, you may take this way of supposition, and say, Let us suppose, that Jesus Christ and his apostles held the doctrines of the church of Rome, and that they believed, men merited eternal life by their good works: let us suppose, that they intended to teach us this doctrine in the gospels and epistles; tell me, I beseech you, if upon this supposition (which is precisely what our adversaries pretend) they ought to have affirmed what they have. Tell me, pray, do you believe yourself well and sufficiently instructed in the doctrine of the merit of good works, when you are told, "when you have done all these things, ye are unprofitable servants?" Again, when the example of a miserable publican is proposed to you, who prays, "God be merciful to me a sinner, who smites his breast, and dares not lift his eyes to heaven; when he is placed in opposition to a pharisee, glorying in his works; and when you are informed, the first went down "to his house justified rather than the other"—when you are told, "if it be by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; if it be by works, it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work:" when

you are told, "you are saved by grace through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God"—when you are assured, you are "justified freely by grace, through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus, not of works, lest any man should boast"—when you hear, that "to him that worketh not, but believeth on him, that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness"—when you are taught to believe, "the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life"—tell me, I once more intreat you, can you persuade yourself that Jesus Christ and his apostles, by all *these* means, intended to teach you, that man acquires justification, and a right to eternal life, by the merit of his works?

You may also make such suppositions in morality as well as in controversy, in order to give greater weight to your exhortations.*

XXII.

GUARD AGAINST OBJECTIONS.

There are very few texts of scripture where this topic may not be made use of; and it is needless to men-

* Bishop MASSILLON's sermon on Christ's divinity, is formed on this plan—'If Jesus Christ were only a mere man,——

I. The *glory* of his ministry would be an inevitable occasion of idolatry to us. An illustrious person was expected by all mankind; promised by the prophets; his birth, life, miracles, &c. were all grand, glorious, and unheard of, and all corresponding with prophecy.

II. The *spirit* of his ministry would become a dreadful snare to our innocence. He preached and practised holiness, as even they who deny his divinity own. The world received numberless advantages, in consequence of his coming. He foretold many events since fulfilled. If then we own the truth of the bible, we must own his divinity." MASS. *Serm. Advent.*

tion examples, they will occur to every one without much reflection.

Remark, however, objections must be natural, and popular, not far-fetched, nor too philosophical; in a word, they must be such as it is absolutely necessary to observe and refute.

They must be proposed in a clear and simple style, without rhetorical exaggerations; yet not unadorned nor unaffecting.

I think, it is never advisable to state objections, and defer the answers to them till another opportunity; answer them directly, forcibly, and fully.

Here, it may be asked, whether, in stating objections to be answered, it be proper to propose them altogether at once, and then come to the answers; or whether they should be proposed and answered one by one? I suppose discretional good sense must serve for both guide and law upon this subject. If three or four objections regard only *one* part of the text, if each may be proposed and answered in a few words, it would not be amiss to propose these objections altogether, distinguishing them however by first, second, third; this may be done agreeably; but if these objections regard *different* parts of the text, or different matters, if they require to be proposed at full length, and if it would also take some time to answer them, it would be impertinence to propose them all together: in such a case they must be proposed and answered apart.

XXIII.

CONSIDER CHARACTERS OF MAJESTY, MEANNESS, INFIRMITY, NECESSITY, UTILITY, EVIDENCE, &c.

Majesty and magnanimity.

Take an example of this from John xiv. 1. "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me." These words are characterised by a *majesty*, which exalts Jesus Christ above all ordinary pastors, and above all the prophets; for who beside the Son of God could say, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me?" These words equal Jesus Christ to the eternal Father, and make him the object of our faith and confidence as well as the Father; for they imply that faithful souls may repose an entire confidence in his power, protection, and government, and that the shadow of his wings will dissipate the sorrows of their minds, and leave no more room for fear.

You see also a character of *tenderness* and infinite love towards his disciples, which appears in the assurance with which he inspires them, and in the promise which he tacitly makes them, of always powerfully supporting, and never forsaking them. The same characters, or others like them, may be observed in all this discourse of our Saviour, which goes on to the end of the sixteenth chapter. As in these words, "I am the way, the truth and the life;" in these, "He that hath seen me, Philip, hath seen the Father;" in these, "Whosoever ye ask in my name I will do it;" and again in these, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." In general, we see

almost in every verse majesty, tenderness, love of holiness, confidence of victory, and other such characters, which it is important to remark.

Meanness and infirmity.

You will very often observe characters of *meanness* and *infirmity* in the words and actions of the disciples of Jesus Christ. As when they asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Acts. i. 6. You see, even after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, they were full of that *low* and carnal idea, which they had entertained, of a temporal Messiah.

You also see a *rash curiosity* in their desiring to know the times and seasons of those great events, which God thought fit to conceal.

Observe again, Peter's vision. A great sheet was let down from heaven, and filled with all sorts of animals; a voice said to him, "Rise Peter, kill and eat;" to which he answered, "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common and unclean." You see in this answer an *over-scrupulous* conscience, all embarrassed with legal ceremonies; and a very defective, imperfect knowledge of gospel liberty.

There is almost an infinite number of texts in the New Testament, where such infirmities appear; and you must not fail to remark them in order to prove; 1. That grace is compatible with much human weakness. 2. That heavenly light arises by degrees upon the mind, and that it is with the new man as with the natural man, who is born an infant, lisps in his childhood, and arrives at perfection insensibly and by little and little. 3. That the strongest and fartherest advanced Christians

ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, since God himself does not "break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." This he was pleased to exemplify in the most ample manner in the person of Jesus Christ, when he was upon earth.

Necessity.

In regard to *necessity*, you may very often remark this in explaining the doctrines of religion; as when you speak of the mission of Jesus Christ into the world; of his familiar conversation with men; of his death; resurrection; and ascension to heaven, &c.; for you may not only consider the *truth*, but also the *necessity* of each; and by this means open a most beautiful field of theological argument and elucidation.

The same may be affirmed of sending the Comforter, that is the Holy Ghost into the world; in explaining ing these words, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter." John xiv. 16. You may very properly consider the necessity of this *comforter;* either because without his light and help we can never release ourselves from the bondage of sin and satan; or because without his assistance all that Jesus Christ has done in the economy of salvation would be entirely useless to us. You may also observe the necessity of his *eternal abode* with us; because it is not enough to be once converted by his efficacious power; we need his continual presence and efficacy, to carry on and finish the work of sanctification; otherwise we should quickly relapse into our first condition.

Utility.

Where a thing does not appear absolutely necessary, you may remark its *utility;* as, in some particular miracles of Jesus Christ; in some peculiar afflictions of the faithful; in the manner in which St. Paul was converted; and in an infinite number of subjects which present themselves to the preacher to be discussed.

Evidence.

Evidence must be particularly pressed in articles which are disputed, or which are likely to be controverted. For example; were you to treat of the second commandment in opposition to the custom and practice of worshipping images in the church of Rome, you should press the *evidence* of the words. As, 1. It has pleased God to place this command not in some obscure part of revelation, but in the *moral law;* in that law, every word of which he caused to proceed from the midst of the flames. 2. He uses not only the term *image*, but *likeness*, and specifies even the likenesses of *all* the things in the world, of those which are *in heaven above*, of those which are *in the earth beneath*, and of those which are *under the earth.* 3. In order to prevent all the frivolous objections of the human mind, he goes yet farther, not only forbidding the *worshipping* of them, but also the making *use* of them in any manner of way; and, which is more, he even forbids the making of them. *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them. Thou shalt not serve them. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image*, &c. 4. Add to all this, that the Lord subjoined the highest *interests* to inforce it. He interested herein

his majesty, his covenant, and his infinite power; *for* (says he) *I am Jehovah thy God.* He goes farther, and interests his jealousy, that is, that inexorable justice, which avenges affronts offered to his love. Yea, in order to touch us still more sensibly, he even goes so far as to interest our children, threatening us with that terrible wrath, which does not end with the parents, but passes down to their posterity. What could the Lord say more plainly and evidently, to show that he would suffer no image in his religious worship? After all this, is it not the most criminal presumption to undertake to distinguish, in order to elude the force of this commandment?

You may, if you choose, over and above all this, add Moses's explication of this command in the fourth of Deuteronomy.

You may also use the same character of *evidence* when you explain several passages, which adversaries abuse, as these words, "this is my body which is broken for you;" and these in the sixth of John, "eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood;" and those passages also in St. James, which speak of justification by works; for in treating these passages in opposition to the false senses, which the church of Rome gives of them, you must assemble many circumstances, and place each in its proper light, so that all together they may diffuse a great brightness upon the text, and clearly show its true sense.*

* It is fashionable with mapy divines, to boast of their aversion to controversy, and to make a merit of teaching only such doctrines as are not disputable. But, is there any one doctrine of natural or revealed religion, which is not controverted? Does not every deist deny our bible, and every atheist the being of our God? A man, therefore, who determines to teach only undisputed articles, determines, *ipso facto*, to teach nothing at all.

XXIV.

REMARK DEGREES.

For example, Gal. i. "If we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that, which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." After you have remarked the extreme force and significancy of the words, observe that the apostle denounced an anathema *twice*, even denouncing it against *himself*, should he ever be guilty of what he condemns, denouncing it even against an *angel* from heaven in the same case.

You must observe, the apostle does not always use the same vehemence when he speaks against error. In the fourteenth of the epistle to the Romans he contents himself with calling those *weak in the faith*, who would eat only herbs, and exhorts the other believers to bear with them. In the third chapter of the first to the Corinthians he protests to those, who build with wood, hay, and stubble upon Christ the foundation, that their *work* should be burnt, but that *they* should *be saved*, though it should be as by *fire*. In the seventeenth of Acts we are told, *his spirit was stirred*, when he saw the idolatry and superstition of the Athenians. Elsewhere, he says, "if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." In all these there is a force; but nothing like what appears in these reit-

No theological subject requires more accurate investigation than this article of *evidence*. Evidence is that which demonstrates. Now there are various *kinds* and *degrees* of evidence, and it would very much contribute to clear a point in debate, were disputants first of all to agree on certain *data*, or *what* should be allowed evidence of the case in question. ROBINSON.

erated words, "though, we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you, than that, which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed." Why so? because the apostle speaks here of an *essential* corruption of the gospel, which the false apostles aimed at in the churches of Galatia; they were annihilating the grace of Christ by associating it with the mosaic economy; they aimed at the entire ruin of the church by debasing the purity of the gospel. In this case the conscience of this good man could contain no longer; he stretched his zeal and vehemence as far as possible; he became inexorable, and pronounced anathemas; nothing prevented him, neither the authority of the greatest men, no, nor yet the dignity of the glorious angels; "if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel, let him be accursed."

XXV.

OBSERVE DIFFERENT INTERESTS.*

Thus if you are explaining the miracle, which Jesus Christ wrought in the Synagogue on a Sabbath-day,

* MASSILLON, in a sermon on Christmas-day, composes by this topick—"God and man are interested in Christ's birth."

I. *God's glory* was concerned. For *idolatry* had transferred that worship to others, which was due only to him. *Formality* prevailed among the Jews, and they rendered him a service not worthy of him. *Philosophy* had conveyed away the glory of his providence and eternal wisdom. Three daring insults, which mankind offered to God, and which Christ came to remove.

II. The *peace* of *mankind* was interested in Christ's birth, for they had robbed one another of that, by pride, by voluptuousness, by revenge. "Christ's grace heals the first, his doctrine the second, his example the last."

Pour Noel Advent.

when he healed the withered hand in the presence of the Herodians and Pharisees, you may remark the different *interests* of the spectators in that act of our Lord Jesus; for on the one hand, *Moses* and his religion seemed interested therein two ways: 1. This miracle was done on a *day*, in which Moses had commanded them to do no manner of work. And, 2. This was done in a *synagogue* consecrated to the mosaic worship, so that it was in a manner insulting Moses in his own house. Farther, the *Herodians*, who were particularly attached to the person of Herod, either for political reasons, or for some others unknown, were obliged to be offended; for this miracle had a tendency to prove Christ's Messiahship, and thereby (as was commonly thought) his right to the kingdom of Israel; and consequently, this must blacken the memory of Herod, who endeavoured to kill him in his infancy. The *Pharisees* were no less interested; for they considered Christ as their reprover and enemy, and could not help being very much troubled, whenever they saw Jesus Christ work a miracle. Observe the interest of our Lord *Jesus Christ;* his concern was to do good, wherever he had an opportunity, and to glorify God his Father, by confirming the word of his gospel by acts of infinite power. The *poor afflicted man* had a double interest in it, the healing of his body, and the improvement of his mind.

Thus this action of Jesus Christ, having divers relations, becomes, as it were a point, whence many lines may be drawn, one on this side, another on that; and hence arise the different remarks which may be made upon it.

XXVI.

DISTINGUISH—DEFINE—DIVIDE.

To speak properly, we *distinguish* when we consider a thing in different views. As, for example, Faith is considerable either objectively, or subjectively. In the view of its *object*, faith is the work of Jesus Christ; his word and cross produce it; for, take away the death of Jesus Christ, and there is no more faith. His resurrection also is the cause of it; "If Jesus Christ be not risen our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins." But if you consider faith in regard to its *subject*, or, to speak more properly, in regard to its efficient cause producing it in the subject, it is the work of the Holy Ghost. So again (to use the same example) faith may be considered with a view to justification, or with a view to sanctification. In the first view it is opposed to works: in the second it is the principle and cause of good works; it contains them in summary and abridgement.

Thus man may be considered with a view to *civil* society; so he is obliged to such and such duties, and partakes of such and such advantages: or he may be considered with regard to *church-fellowship;* and so he is subject to other laws, and enjoys other privileges. This custom of distinguishing into different views is very common in preaching.

Definition.

This is sometimes used when an act of God is spoken of, as the pardon of our sins—the justification of our persons, &c.—or when a virtue or a vice is in question; for then it may not be improper to define.

Division.

This either regards different species of the genus, or different parts of a whole; and it may sometimes be used profitably. Thus, in speaking of God's providence in general, you may consider the extent of that providence to which are subject, 1. Natural causes. 2. Contingent. 3. Independent. 4. Good and bad. 5. Great and small.

XXVII.

COMPARE THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE TEXT TOGETHER.

This is a very useful topic; and it will often furnish very beautiful considerations, if we know how to make a proper use of it. For example, in this text of St. Paul to the Romans, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." You may make a very edifying comparison between this last part, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit," with the first part, "there is no condemnation;" and you may remark, that in the one, the apostle expresses what God does in favour of the faithful, and in the other what the faithful do for the glory of God. God absolves them; and they live holily, and devote themselves to good works. God imposes holiness upon us in justification; and justification is the parent of holiness; take away justification, and there cannot possibly be any good works; take away good works, and there is no more justification.

You may also compare this last part with the condition in which the believer is here considered; he is *in*

Christ Jesus; and remark that these two things perfectly agree together, because Jesus Christ is the true cause of our justification; and sanctification is the principal effect of our communion with Jesus Christ.

So again, in this beautiful passage in the second of Ephesians; "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace are ye saved." You may oppose and compare these two subjects in the text, *dead in sin*, and *rich in mercy*, as being two extremes, extreme misery, and extreme mercy, one in us, and the other in God. The greatness of our crimes manifest the riches of God's mercy: and the riches of his mercy absorb the greatness of our crimes. Had our sins been less, it must indeed have been mercy to pardon our sins, but not *riches* of mercy. If God had been only lightly inclined to mercy he might indeed have pardoned smaller sins, but this would never have extended to persons *dead* in their sins; this belongs only to extraordinary and abounding mercy.*

* The Editor has omitted in this place a long discourse upon 1 Thess. iv. 7. which Mr. Claude had subjoined with a view to exemplify the discussion of a text by way of observations. But it was not altogether calculated to answer the end proposed, because it exemplified very few of the preceding topics, and those without any attention to their order, or any intimation what topics he intended to exemplify. Though, therefore, the discourse contained, as every production of Mr. Claude's must, many striking and useful sentiments, the reader, who seeks information respecting the Composition of a Sermon, has no occasion to regret the omission of it; more especially as the discourse was at least one third as long as all the twenty-seven topics taken together. It should be remembered, however, that these topics are subject both to use and abuse. They are suggested in order to aid invention; but they require judgment and discretion in the use of them. SIMEON.

CHAP. VII.

OF TEXTS TO BE DISCUSSED IN A WAY OF CONTINUED APPLICATION.

We have said, there are two general ways of discussing a text, that of explication, and that of observation. These two ways of preaching we call *textuary*, because, in effect, they keep to the text without digression, they regard it as the subject matter of the whole discussion, or, if you please, as the field, which they have to cultivate, or to reap: but, beside these, there is a third way, which is, without explaining or making observations, the making of a *continual application* of it, and the reducing of it immediately to practice.

In this manner we must principally manage texts exhorting to holiness, and repentance, as this of Zephaniah, "examine yourselves diligently, O nation not desirable;" for, instead of explaining the terms—or making observations on the necessity of the exhortation—the prophet who spoke it—the Jews to whom it is addressed—the description of the nation *not desirable*—the mercy of God in calling these sinners to repentance, &c. the whole may very usefully be turned into practice, and we may enter upon that serious self-examination, which the prophet commands.

The same may be said of 1 Cor. xi. 28. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup;" for, laying aside all theological observations, you may actually enter upon self-examination.

This manner, well and wisely disposed, by choosing proper occasions, will produce (as I have elsewhere said)

an excellent effect ; but always remember on this rule, that in using this method, something searching and powerful must be said, or it would be better let alone.*

CHAP. VIII.

OF TEXTS TO BE DISCUSSED IN PROPOSITIONS.

To these three, a fourth may be added, which consists in reducing the texts to a number of propositions, two at least, and three or four at most, having mutual dependence, and connexion. Thus, for example, Rom. viii. 13. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." You may, without pretending to explain the terms, *flesh—spirit—death—life*, or the phrases, *live after the flesh—mortify the deeds of the body*—(which is the usual method) you may reduce the whole to two *propositions ;* the one, that the damnation of sinners is inevitable—and the other, that a good and holy life is both a principal end of the gospel, and an inseparable character of christianity. When this method is taken, there is much more liberty than in the former, and a more extensive field opens. In the former methods you are restrained to your *text*, and you can only explain and apply that ; you can make no other observations, than such as precisely belong to it ; but here your subject is the matter contained in your *propositions*, and you may treat of them thoroughly, and extend them as far as you please, provided you do not violate the general rules of a sermon. Here you must propose not to treat of the text,

* An example of a long sermon is here omitted.

but of those *subjects*, which you have chosen from several contained in the text. The way of explication is most proper to give the meaning of Scripture; and this of systematical divinity. The way of application rather regards practice than theory: but this, which we call the way of propositions, or points, is more proper to produce an acquaintance with systematical divinity, and it will equally serve theory and practice.*

* For example, Rom. viii. 13. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if through the Spirit, &c." After explaining the terms, the whole discourse may be reduced to two propositions;

I. The damnation of the wicked is inevitable.

It is deplorable to consider the blindness in which the greatest part of the people in the world live, who seldom think of the punishments of hell, or the consequences of death. From this blindness comes their insensibility to religion, and their extreme attachment to the vanities of this present evil world.

Yet, however great this blindness is, it is in a measure voluntary, proceeding more from the malice of the heart, than the darkness of the understanding; for the passions avoid those objects, which are disagreeable to them, and perpetually substitute others to employ the mind. Hence, it is of the last importance to meditate on this matter, on which depends our eternal interest in a future world.

1. Man is a creature subject to a law; and even the light of his conscience discovers an essential difference between vice and virtue, good actions and bad. But a law is no law, if it do not suppose a judgment; and judgment is no judgment, if it do not suppose punishment.

And by the consent of all mankind, in the thickest darkness of paganism, when God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways, even then, it was always acknowledged that there were rewards to the virtuous, and punishments to the impious.

But this is capable of further proof by the principles of all religions. There never was, nor can there ever be any, which is not founded on this principle, that God is our sovereign Judge, who holds in his hands our life and death.

Finally, we observe, that revealed religion has carefully placed this truth in full evidence; showing not only the *truth* of the punishment of sinners, but also the *degrees* of it.—A punishment after death and judgment—which involves both body and soul—which has truly the essence of pain, and not annihilation—a punishment proportional in greatness as well as in duration.

2. Having thus established the truth of our proposition, we may pass on to the vain *subterfuges*, which sinners use on the subject.—It is a distressing subject, therefore they do not like to think about it; but what folly is there in this conduct. They resemble prisoners already in irons, and doomed to punishment, who stifle the sense of the misery by plunging into debauchery.

It must not be thought, that these *four* ways of discussing texts are so heterogeneous, that they can never

When worldly men cannot entirely avoid the thought of damnation, they venture to take refuge in *false notions*.—'God, say they, is a gracious judge, he has the compassion of a father.' What a marvellous abuse is this of mercy! But will mercy allow the impunity of that sinner, who persists in sin, and would make compassion itself an accomplice in his crimes?

The wicked seldom fail to abuse the evangelical doctrine of the death of Christ—to hide in a *multitude* like themselves—to consider damnation as a very distant thing—to *extenuate* their sins, and to hide the enormity and number of them.

But, to speak plainly, all these are only vain pretences, the falsehood of which even the wicked acknowledge; the only reason why they avoid conversion is, that ardent love, that obstinate attachment, which they have to vice. This is the true cause; and all the rest, if they would speak honestly, are only vain pretences.

Now, I ask, is not this love to sin the greatest folly in the world? while on the one hand, it renders us incapable of enjoying ourselves; and, on the other hand, draws upon us the condemnation of God, and conducts us a great pace towards those eternal torments, which he has prepared for the wicked.

II. The practice of good works, and an holy and religious life, is the principal end which the gospel proposes, and the principal character of the true christian.

This is manifest from passages of scripture innumerable.—"The grace of God that bringeth salvation," &c. &c.

Indeed, by a general view of the end for which Christ came into the world, you will see he came to *destroy the works of the devil.* The works of the devil are principally two, sin and punishment—let us not imagine that Jesus Christ came into the world to take away the punishment only, and to leave sin triumphant.

I will even venture to say, he came to destroy sin rather than sorrow. Suffering concerns only the creature; but sin concerns the Creator as well as the creature; it dishonours the one and distresses the other.

Is it likely, think ye, that Jesus Christ would have quitted his mansion of glory, and descended to this earth, to acquire an impunity for criminals, leaving them immersed in sensuality and sin? Is it likely that he can hold communion with people in rebellion and profaneness?

From all which it clearly follows, that an unsanctified man has not the spirit of Christ, is not in communion with him, does not belong to his mystical body, is not a true believer; in a word, is not a true christian. Holiness is an inseparable companion, and a necessary effect of the gospel.

But, if holiness be a necessary consequence of the gospel, it is no less true that the gospel is an inexhaustible source of motives to holiness. I pass over its precepts, and rules of conduct—all its mysteries point at this—all its doctrines are so many bonds, to bind our hearts to the obedience of faith.

be mixed together; on the contrary, there are a great many texts, in which it will be necessary to make use of two, or three, and sometimes even of all the four ways. When a text is *explained*, it will be very often needful to make some *observations* also, and the matter will require as long an *application*. Sometimes, to explain a text well, the matter must be reduced into many *propositions*, as we have observed on these words, "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." In like manner, when the method of *observation* is used, it very often happens that some part of the text needs *explaining*, and so of the rest. These four ways must be distinguished for two reasons. 1. Because they are very different from one another; to explain, to make observations, to apply, and to reduce to proposi-

To which we may add, the gospel consecrates to holy uses, even what the light of nature teacheth us,—as, that God is our *Creator*, and made us by his power; and our *Preserver*, who supports us by a perpetual influence, and prevents our falling back into non-entity; that it is his providence which governs the whole universe, and particularly watches over us.

O powerful motives to love and obedience! Shall it be said that God preserves ungrateful and rebellious creatures, who do nothing but affront him? Shall it be said his sun cheers us in the same manner, as it does serpents and vipers? and that it influences us as it does envenomed dragons?

But all these motives, however great and powerful, are nothing in comparison of those which the gospel takes from its own source; and they are such as must affect every soul, which is not, I do not say hard and insensible, but entirely dead in sin, or possessed by the devil. For, in one word, that God, after all our rebellions, and all our crimes, should yet be reconciled to us; that he should give his Son, that he should give him to be flesh and blood like us, that he should give him to *die for us!* is not this love and mercy worthy of eternal praise? And what horrible ingratitude must it be, if after all this we should be yet capable of wilfully sinning against a God so good, and of counting *the blood of such a covenant an unholy thing*.

Hence it appears, that christianity is dishonoured, when the outward profession of it is attended with a bad life—how they deceive themselves, who, without sanctification and good works, imagine themselves christians—and that it is the vainest of all hopes to imagine they may be saved by such a bare profession. Many will come to Jesus Christ in the last day, saying "Lord, Lord," &c.

CLAUDE.

tions, are four very different ways of treating texts. A composer, then, must not confound them together; but he must observe the difference well, that he may use them properly. 2. Because it is customary to give the discussion of a text the name of the *prevailing* manner of handling it. We call that the way of explication, in which there is more explication than observation. We not only call that the way of observation, which has only observations, but that in which there is more observation than explication, or application; and so of the rest.

CHAP. IX.

OF THE EXORDIUM.

The exordium is that part, in which the minds of the hearers are *prepared*, and a natural and easy way opened to the discussion.

But, first, a question presents itself (on which opinions are much divided,) whether exordiums be necessary? or even whether they be not in all cases quite useless, and in some hurtful? Whether it would not be better entirely to omit them, to begin immediately with the connexion of the text with the preceding verses, pass to the division, and so enter on the discussion? There are many of this opinion, and their reasons are, 1. That there appears too much *artifice* in an exordium, which is more likely to dissipate, than to conciliate, the attention of your hearers. "It is evident (say they) to the auditors, that you design to come insensibly, and by a kind of artful manœuvre, to your matter, and to lead your hearers almost imperceptibly to it; but this seems a finesse altogether

unworthy of the gospel, and contrary to that sincerity, ingenuousness, gravity, and simplicity, which should reign in the pulpit. Indeed, when a wise hearer perceives you design to deceive him, he conceives a strong prejudice against you, and that prejudice will certainly be hurtful in the following part of the discourse."

They add, in the *second* place, that "exordiums are *extremely difficult to compose*, and justly styled the *crosses of preachers.* Should some small advantage be gained by exordiums, it would not be of consequence enough to induce us to compose them. In so doing we should waste a part of our time and strength, which might be much more usefully employed."

They say *thirdly*, that "the principal end proposed in an exordium is either to conciliate the hearer's affection, or to excite his attention, or to prepare the way to the matters to be treated of: but all these are to be *supposed.* As to their affection, pastors, who preach to their own flocks, ought not to doubt that. We speak to christians, to persons, who consider us as the ministers of Jesus Christ, whom, consequently, they respect and love. As to attention, it ought also to be supposed: not only because pulpit-subjects are divine and salutary to men, but also because such only come to public worship as desire to hear the word of God attentively; and, indeed, if the auditors have not that disposition of themselves, an exordium cannot give it them. Such a disposition is an effect of a man's faith, and piety, and it is not to be thought, that an exordium of eight or ten periods can convert the worldly and profane, or give faith and piety to those, who have them not. As to what regards the introducing of the matter to be treated of, the bare reading of the text sufficiently does that; for, according to

the common way of preaching, the text contains the subject to be discussed."

Finally, they add, "delivering an exordium is only mispending *time*, uselessly dissipating a part of the hearers' attention, so that afterward, they frequently sleep very quietly when you enter on the discussion. Would it not be better, then, immediately to engage them in the matter, so that their attachment may afterward serve to maintain their attention, according to the natural inclination, which all men have to finish what they have once begun?"

But none of these reasons are weighty enough to persuade us to reject exordiums, or to be careless about them. As to the first, The art which appears in an exordium, so far from being odious in itself, and seeming unnatural to the hearers, is, on the contrary, altogether natural. It is disagreeable to enter abruptly into theological matters without any preparation. It would not be necessary, were our minds all exercised about divine things; but as, alas! we are in general too little versed in such exercises, it is good to be conducted to them without violence, and to have emotions excited in us in a soft, and insensible manner. It is not finesse, and deceit, since in doing it we only accommodate ourselves to the weakness of man's mind, and indeed, it is what he himself desires. Moreover, it is to be observed, that hearers are now so habituated to an exordium, that if they heard a preacher enter abruptly into his matter, they would be extremely disgusted, and would imagine, the man was aiming to do with them what the angel did with Habakkuk, when he took him by the hair of his head, and transported him in an instant from Judea to Babylon. Some time then ought to be employed gently

to lead the mind of the hearer to the subjects, of which you are going to treat. You are not to suppose that he already understands them, nor that he is thinking on what you have been meditating, nor that he can apply it instantly without preparation.

The second reason may have some weight with weak and lazy preachers; but it has none with wise and diligent students; and, after all, exordiums are not so difficult, as to be impracticable: a little pains taking is sufficient, as we every day experience.

The third is not more considerable. I grant, preachers ought to suppose the love and affection of their hearers; yet it does not follow, that they ought not to excite it, when they preach to them. Perhaps their affection is not always in exercise: it may be sometimes suspended, and even opposed by contrary sentiments; by coolness and indifference, by hatred or envy, arising from the defects of the pastor (for, however able, he is not perfect,) or from the depravity of the hearers. The same may be said of attention, although they ought to have it entirely for the divine truths, which the preacher speaks; yet, it is certain, they have it not; and all that a preacher can desire is, that his hearers have a general disposition to hear the gospel. The preacher must endeavour to give them a peculiar attention to such matters as he has to discuss. As to the rest, it must not be thought, that the bare reading of the text, or the connexion, or the division only can produce that effect; a greater compass must be taken, to move the human mind, and apply the subject. And this also may be said of preparation, for which an exordium is principally designed. The reading of the text may do something; connexion

and division may contribute more; but all this, without an exordium, will be useless.

Nor is it difficult to answer the fourth reason; for, beside the advantages of an exordium, which are great enough to prevent our calling it lost time, its parts are ordinarily so short, that they cannot justly be accused of dissipating or fatiguing the hearer's minds. To which I add, that the exordium itself, if well chosen will always contain agreeable and instructive matter, so that, considered in itself, something good is always to be learned from it.

We cannot approve, then, of the custom of the *English preachers*, who enter immediately into the literal explication of the text, and make it serve for an exordium; after which they divide their discourses into several parts, which they discuss as they go on. Surely the hearer is not suddenly able to comprehend their explications, having yet neither emotions nor preparation. Methinks, it would be much better gently to stir them up, and move them by something, which gives no pain, than to load them all on a sudden with an explication, which they can neither clearly comprehend, nor perhaps distinctly hear.

Least of all do we approve of the custom of some of our own preachers, who, intending to explain the text, or to make some reflections throughout the whole sermon, enter immediately into the matter, without any exordiums at all. I am persuaded, they are induced to do thus only for the sake of avoiding the difficulty of composing an exordium, that is, in one word, only for the sake of indulging their idleness and negligence.

Taking it for granted, then, that an exordium must be used, it may be asked, what are the principal bene-

fits we expect to receive from them? and with what general views ought they to be composed? In answer, we say, the principal design of an exordium is to attract or excite the *affections* of the audience; to stir up their *attention;* and to *prepare* them for the particular matters, of which we are about to treat.*

The two first of these must only be proposed *indirectly.* A preacher would render himself ridiculous, if in ordinary discourses, and without cases of extreme necessity, he should *labour* by this means to acquire the esteem and affection of his congregation. This method would be more likely to make them rather despise than esteem him.

You must not, then, compliment the people, nor praise yourself, nor indeed speak of yourself in any manner of way. These are affectations, which never succeed; and yet some able preachers slip into this weakness, especially when they preach to strange congregations, and, above all, when they address assemblies of the rich, the learned, or the noble.

Then they never fail to interlard their exordiums with some common place saws; either the pleasure it gives them to be called to that pulpit; or an affectation of self-contempt; a confession of their great weakness; or something of this kind. To speak my opinion freely, I think these are pedantic airs, which have a very bad effect. Sensible auditors do not like to hear such fan-

* *Introductions are intended to excite affection and attention, and to prepare the auditor for the subject.* "Causa principii nulla alia est, quam ut auditorem, quo sit nobis in cæteris partibus accommodatior, præparemus. Id fieri tribus maxime rebus, inter actores plurimos constat, si *benevolum, attentum, docilem* fecerimus; non quia ista per totam actionem non sint custodienda, sed quia in initiis maxime necessaria, per quæ in animum judicis, ut procedere ultra possimus, admittimur." *Quint. Inst. lib.* iv. *cap.* i.

tastical pretences, which are both contrary to the gravity of the pulpit, and to the decency of a modest man.

How then, you will ask, must the *affections* of the hearers be attracted? I answer, *indirectly*, by an exordium well chosen, and well spoken; and this is the surest way of succeeding.

In regard to *attention*, it is certain it ought to be awakened, and fixed in the same manner, that is, by something agreeable, and worthy of being heard, a composition of piety and good sense. I do not disapprove of asking sometimes for attention, either on account of the importance of the matter, the solemnity of the day, the state of the church, or, in short, of any other particular occasion; but it must not be done often: for then it would never be minded; and, when it is done, the fewer words the better.*

The *principal use* of an exordium is to *prepare* the hearer's mind for the particular matters you have to treat of, and insensibly to conduct him to it. If this end be not obtained, the exordium cannot but be impertinent; and, on the contrary, if this end be answered, the exordium cannot be improper.

When I say, the hearer's mind must be prepared for, and conducted to the matter, I mean to say, these are two different things. You *prepare* the hearer for the matter, when you stir up in him such *dispositions* as he ought to have, to hear well, and to profit much.

* The fathers, about the time of Chrysostom, made use of what some have called *Præexordia*, and they thought they derived the custom from the apostles. Paul begins his epistles with, "Grace and peace be with you from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ." In imitation of this, when a father ascended the pulpit, he used to pause a moment, and then say, *Peace be with you all!* or, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!* or something of this kind. In return the people answered, *And with thy spirit!* and then he entered on his sermon. ROBINSON.

You insensibly *conduct* your hearer to the matter, when, by the natural connexion of the subjects of which you speak, you lead him from one thing to another, and enable him to enter into the doctrine of your sermon.

Let us advert a moment to each. The *preparation* must be determined by the subject, of which you are going to speak; for if it be a sad and afflicting subject, in which you aim to excite the compassion, the grief, and the tears of your audience, you must begin the exordium by imparting such a disposition.

If you have to treat of a profound and difficult mystery, aim to diffuse elevation and admiration among the hearers. If some terrible example of God's justice be the subject, endeavour to stir up fear. If some enormous crime, prepare the mind for horror by a meditation on the enormity of human corruption. If you have to treat of repentance, and in an extraordinary manner to interest your hearers in it, you must begin to dispose them to it by general ideas of God's wrath, which we have deserved; of the little fruit we have borne to his glory; or something of a like nature. If, on the contrary, the matter, you have to treat of, be common and tranquil, aim in your exordium to place the mind in its natural state, and only endeavour to excite honest and christian tempers, which we all ought always to have. In a word the exordium must always participate the spirit of the subject, that you mean to discuss, in order to dispose your hearers for it. Not to use in this manner, is to loose all the benefit of an exordium; and to use it to an opposite purpose, would be to renounce common sense, and to act like an idiot.

The second use of an introduction is to *conduct* the hearer gradually to the subject, of which you are about

to treat. This (as I have said) depends on the connexion between the subjects of the exordium with themselves, and with the matter of the discussion. I say first with *themselves*; for they must, as it were, hold each other by the hand, and have a mutual dependence and subordination, otherwise the auditor will be surprised to find himself suddenly transported from one topic to another. I say also with the *discussion*, for the exordium is principally intended to introduce that.

The first quality of an exordium is *brevity*. This, however, has a proper measure; for as it ought not to be excessively long, so neither should it be too short; the middle way is best. The longest exordium may have ten or twelve periods, and the shortest six or seven, provided the periods be not too long. The reason is, that, on the one hand, proper time may be given the hearer to prepare himself to hear you with attention, and to follow you in the discussion of the matter; and, on the other, that in giving time sufficient for that, you may prevent his wandering out of the subject, wearying himself, and becoming impatient. If the exordium were too short, it would oblige the hearer to enter too soon into the matter without preparation enough; and excessive length would weary him; for it is with an auditor, as with a man who visits a palace, he does not like to stay too long in the court, or first avenues, he would only view them transiently without stopping, and proceed as soon as possible to gratify his principal curiosity.

2. An exordium must be *clear*, and consequently disengaged from all sorts of abstruse and metaphysical thoughts. It should be expressed in natural and popular terms, and not overcharged with matter. Indeed, as the auditors are neither enlivened nor moved, yet you must not ex-

pect of them at first a great degree of penetration and elevation, nor even a great attempt towards these, though they may be capable of them when they are animated. You must therefore, in an exordium, avoid all that can give pain to the mind, such as physical questions, long trains of reasoning, and such like. However, do not imagine, that, under pretence of great clearness, an exordium must have only theological matter, or consist rather of words than things. This would be falling into the other extreme. An exordium, then, must contain matter capable of nourishing and satisfying the mind; to do which, it must be clear, easy to comprehend, and expressed in a very natural manner.

3. An exordium must be *cool and grave.** Consequently no grand figures may be admitted, as apostrophes, violent exclamations, reiterated interrogations, nor, in a word, any thing that tends to give vehement emotions to the hearers: for, as the discourse must be accommodated to the state of the hearer, he in the beginning being cool, and free from agitations, the speaker ought to be so too. No wise man will approve exordiums full of enthusiasms, and poetical raptures, full of impetuous or angry emotions, or of bold interrogations, or surprising paradoxes to excite admiration. You must in the beginning speak gently, remembering that your auditors are neither yet in heaven, nor in the air, nor at all elevated

* *An exordium must be cool.* Mr. Claude's rule is undoubtedly good in general, and his reason weighty.

This, however, is a rule sometimes dispensed with. Cicero begins an oration thus; "Quousque tandem abutere, Catalina, patientia nostra? Quamdiu, etiam furor iste tuus nos illudet? Quem ad finem sese effrenata jactabit audacia?" &c. Perhaps an exordium somewhat more animated than usual may be proper on such occasions, as the first and twelfth of the skeletons, published by the Editor.

in their way thither, but upon earth, and in a place of worship.

4. An exordium, however, ought not to be so cool and grave, as not to be at the same time *engaging and agreeable.* There are three principal ends, which a preacher should propose, namely, to instruct, to please, and to affect; but, of these three, that which should reign in an exordium is, to please. I own you should also aim to instruct and affect; but less to instruct than to please, and less still to affect than to instruct. Indeed, if you can judiciously and properly introduce any thing tender into an exordium (especially on extraordinary occasions) you may to good purpose; but, be that as it may, the agreeable should reign in this part. You easily see by this that you must banish from the exordium, all ill-natured censures, terrible threatenings, bitter reproaches, and, in general, all that savours of anger, contempt, hatred, or indifference, and in short, every thing that has the air of quarrelling with the hearers. Their attention must not only be excited (you may sufficiently do so by censures and reproaches) but you must softly insinuate yourself into their esteem, so that they may not only not oppose what you say, but be well satisfied you are an honest and well-meaning man.†

5. *The whole of the exordium must be naturally connected with all the matter of the text.* I say first the *whole*

† *Satisfy your hearers that you are a well-meaning man.* Hence Quintilian so much insists on his orator's being a *good* man. The whole first chapter of his twelfth book is spent in proving the necessity of this; and, if this be so needful at the bar, how much more so is it in the pulpit! His conclusion is enough to make a christian minister blush. "*Men had better be born dumb, and even destitute of reason, than pervert those gifts of providence to pernicious purposes.* Mutos enim nasci, et egere omni ratione satius fuisset, quam providentiæ munera in mutuam perniciem convertere." *Quint. l.* xii. *c.* i.

of the *exordium;* for great care must be taken to put nothing there foreign to your subject: therefore the best exordiums are those, which are composed of two propositions, the first of which is naturally and immediately connected with the second, and the second naturally and immediately with the text. Each of these propositions may be either proved, or amplified; but the last must always conduct you with ease to the subject in question, nor must the first be very distant. According to this maxim, all exordiums must be condemned, which, instead of leading you into the text, make you, as it were, tumble from a precipice into it, which is intolerable. Those also are to be condemned, which conduct to the text by many long circuits, that is, by many propositions chained together, which is certainly vicious, and can only fatigue the hearer. I add, in the second place, the exordium must be connected with the *whole* matter of the *text.* It ought not merely to relate to one of its parts, (or to one view only, if you intend to consider it in different views) but to all. One of the principal uses of an exordium is to prepare the mind of the hearer for the matter to be discussed. If, therefore, the exordium refer only to one of its parts; or to one view only, it will prepare the mind of the hearer for that one part, for that one view only, and not for the rest.

6. An exordium *must be simple.* We would not entirely banish figures: on the contrary, we would always employ such as may render the discourse pleasant and agreeable: but pompous and magnificent expressions must be avoided, as far as the things spoken will admit. Do not use a style too elevated, bordering on bombast; nor periods too harmonious; nor overstrained allegories; nor even metaphors too common or too bold; for indeed

the hearer's mind, yet cool and in its natural state, can bear nothing of this kind.

7. An exordium must *not be common.* As this is a rule much abused, it will be needful to explain it. By a common exordium, I do not mean an exordium, which will suit many texts; for if the texts are parallel, and the subject be managed with the same views, and in the same circumstances, what occasion is there to compose different exordiums? By a common exordium, I mean, in the first place, one taken from trivial things, and which have been said over and over again; these the people already know, and your labour will infallibly be thrown away. Such are exordiums taken from comparisons of the sun—of kings—of conquerors—of the ancient Romans, &c.—or from some histories of the Old Testament, which have been often repeated—or of some well-known types, as the Israelites' passage through the Red Sea—and many more of the same kind. In the second place, I mean, by a common or general exordium, one, which may be alike applied to two texts of different matter, or to two contrary interpretations of the same text. It is in this sense that common exordiums are vicious and distasteful.

8. Even in metaphorical or figurative texts, it is quite puerile to make an exordium join the text by a metaphor; for, whatever ingenuity there may seem to be in it, it is certain, there is no taste, no judgment discovered in the practice; and, however it may pass in college declamations, it would appear too trifling in the pulpit. The exordium, then, must be connected with the text by the matter itself; that is, not by the figure, but by the *subject* intended to be conveyed by the figure. I would not, however, forbid the joining of the exordium

to the text sometimes by the figure, provided it be done in a chaste and prudent manner.

Let us give one example. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." John vi. 54. An exordium to a sermon from this text may be taken from the idea, which holy scripture teaches us to form of our conversion, as if it were a NEW *birth*, which begins a new life; that for this purpose, it speaks of a new *man*, a new *heaven*, which illuminates, and a new *earth*, which supports him; that, attributing to this new man the same *senses*, which nature has formed in us, as sight, hearing, feeling, smelling, tasting, it attributes also to him *objects* proportioned to each of these mystical senses, and ascribes to them *effects* like those, which our senses produce by their natural operations. It tells us; that our *eyes* contemplate the celestial *light*, which illuminates and guides us in the ways of righteousness; that our *ears* hear the *voice* of God, who calls us, and who by these means makes us obey our vocation. It tells us that the gospel is a *savour* of life, which communicates salvation to us. And, finally, it attributes to us a *mouth* to eat the *flesh*, and drink the *blood* of the Son of God, in order to nourish us to life eternal. It is this last expression, which Jesus Christ has made use of in the sixth of John, and which says in my text, "he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life."

This exordium joins itself to the text by the figure made use of in the text, but in such a manner as not to be chargeable with affectation, or witticism; for it is by a serious reflection on the *scripture use* of the figure, acknowledging it to be a figure, and *preparing* the hearer to attend to the explication.

To these rules I subjoin a word or two on the *vices*

of exordiums. 1. There are some preachers, who imagine it a fine thing to take exordiums from the persons of their hearers, or the circumstances of times, places, general affairs, or news of the world: but I believe this is altogether a vicious method, and should never be used but on extraordinary occasions. First, there is too much *affectation* in it. Is it not a vain parade, to begin a discourse with things which have no relation to the matter? It is certainly contrary to the chastity and modesty of a christian pulpit. Secondly, exordiums of this sort are usually pulled in by head and shoulders. How should it be otherwise, when the articles, of which they are composed, have, if any, only a very distant relation to the text? By such means you defeat the principal design of an exordium, which is to prepare the hearers' minds, and to conduct them insensibly to the subject. And, finally it is very difficult in such exordiums to avoid saying impertinences; for what, in a public discourse, can be more indelicate, than to speak of yourself, or hearers, or times, or news? In my opinion such exordiums ought to be entirely rejected.

2. You must also, for the most part, reject exordiums taken from profane history, or what they call the apothegms of illustrious men. This method savours too much of the college, and is by no means in the taste of pious, well bred men. Alexander, Cæsar, Pompey, all the great names of antiquity have no business to ascend the pulpit; and if they are not suffered now-a-days, either in orations in the senate, or in pleas of the bar, much less ought they to be allowed in christian sermons. It may not be amiss, if they appear now and then in the discussion, or in the application; but even there we ought to see them but seldom, not oftener than once a

year at most: but to introduce them at the beginning of a sermon is intolerable. I say much the same of citations from profane authors; they must be forborne, unless it be something so particular, so agreeable, and so apt to the text, as to carry its own recommendation along with it.

In general the best exordiums are taken from *theology;* for, as, on the one hand, they have always more relation to the matter of the text, so, on the other, they much better prepare the hearers' minds, being more grave, and free from the puerile pedantries of the college.

In order to compose an exordium, after you have well considered the senses of the text, and observed what are the principal matters, which ought to enter into the discussion, and after you have made the division, endeavour to reduce the whole to one common idea, and then choose some other idea naturally connected with that common idea, either immediately, or by means of another. If it be immediately connected with the subject, endeavour to reduce it to one proposition, which may be cleared and proved as you go on; or if it have parts, which require separate explications and proofs, it must be managed so as to include them; and finally, by the natural connexion of that proposition with the discussion, enter into the text. If the proposition be connected with the text only remotely, then establish the first, pass on to the second, and so proceed from the second to the text.

Exordiums may be *taken from* almost all the same topics as observations, that is, from *genus*, *species*, *contraries*, *&c.* For there are but few good exordiums, which might not go into the discussion, under the title of gen-

eral observation. Of such observations, that must be chosen for an exordium, which is least essential, or least necessary to the discussion, and which, besides, is clear, agreeable, and entertaining. A *comparison* may sometimes be employed in an exordium, but not often; nor must trivial comparisons be used, which all the world know, or which are taken from any thing mean; nor must they be embarrassing, taken from things unknown to the people, as those are, which are borrowed from mechanics, astronomy, &c. of which the people know nothing at all.

Bible-history may be used, but sparingly; and the application must be always just, agreeable, and, in some sort, new and remarkable.

Types may also be employed; but with the same precautions, always consulting good sense and taste.

The best method is to compose several *exordiums for the same text*, by turning your imagination divers ways, by taking it in all its different relations; for by such means you may choose the most proper. But after all these general precepts, which indeed ought to be known, and by which exordiums must be regulated, it is certain, *the invention and composition of an exordium can only become easy by practice.* A young preacher ought not to complain of trouble, nor to be any way negligent in the matter; for he may be sure of succeeding by attention and application.

CHAP. X.

OF THE CONCLUSION.*

THE Conclusion ought to be lively and animating, full of great and beautiful figures, aiming to move christian affections, as the love of God, hope, zeal, repentance, self-condemnation, a desire of self-correction, consolation, admiration of eternal benefits, hope of felicity, courage and constancy in afflictions, steadiness in temptations, gratitude to God, recourse to him by prayer, and other such dispositions.†

* *Conclusion.* This in a sermon answers to what in an oration is called the *peroration.* "It recapitulates, or sums up the strongest and chief arguments, and, by moving the passions, endeavours to persuade the hearers to *yield* to the force of them."—*Arist. Rhet.*

The fire of the preacher should blaze here; he should collect the ideas of his whole sermon into this part, as rays are collected in the focus of a burning-glass and inflame the hearts of his auditors.

† Bishop Burnet says, "A sermon, the conclusion whereof makes the auditory look pleased, and sets them all talking with one another, was certainly either not rightly spoken, or not rightly heard; it has been fine, and has probably delighted the congregation rather than edified it; but that sermon that makes every one go away silent, and grave, and hastening to be alone to meditate, and pray the matter over in secret, has had a true effect." *Past. care, chap.* ix.

Let the peroration, or conclusion, be *short;* let it be bold and *lively;* and let some one or more striking ideas, not mentioned before in the discussion, be reserved for this part, and let it be applied with vigour. *Bucholtzer* used to say, *A good preacher was known by his conclusion.* He frequently concluded his discourse with some such sentence as the following. Here, my brethren, I stop, I leave the Holy Spirit to preach to you. Now, christians, I have done my part. May the Lord condescend to do his in your hearts! I have planted and watered. May God give the increase! I have been preaching to you, and setting before you the gospel of Salvation. May the Lord God apply it to your hearts, for his glory, and for your eternal felicity! May the Lord set home to your hearts what I have been preaching! For my part, I am only his messenger to you. He is the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. KECKERMANNI *Rhet. Eccl.*

The publisher of *Massillon's* sermons describes, in the preface, the bishop's

There are three sorts of dispositions, or emotions: the violent, the tender, and the elevated. The *violent* are, for example, indignation, fear, zeal, courage, firmness against temptations, repentance, self-loathing, &c.

The *tender* emotions are joy, consolation, gratitude; tender subjects are pardon, pity, prayer, &c.* The *el-*

method of prsaching, by saying, that "What formed the distinct character of father *Massillon's* eloquence, was, that all his strokes aimed directly at the *heart*, so that what was simply reason and proof in others, was *feeling* in his mouth. Hence the remarkable effects of his instructions; nobody after hearing him stopped to praise or criticise his sermon. Each auditor retired in a pensive silence, with a thoughtful air, downcast eyes, and composed countenance, carrying away the arrow fastened in his heart. When Massillon had preached his first advent at Versailles, Lewis XIV. said these remarkable words to him: 'Father, I have heard many fine orators in my chapel, and have been very much pleased with them; but as for you, always when I have heard you, I have been very much displeased with myself.' *Serm. de Massill. pet. car. pref.*

* *Tender conclusion.* Example of a *tender* conclusion, from a sermon of Bishop *Massillon* to his clergy. And indeed, my brethren, can a pastor live either without prayer, or can he pray but seldom; or can he pray without fervour and zeal, or can he confine all his prayers to a cold, inattentive, and hasty rehearsal of his breviary, while he passes his life among his parishoners, and sees the greatest part of them lying in sin, and perishing every day before his eyes? When the high priest Aaron saw a part of his people smitten by the hand of God, and expiring before him, he ran between the dead and the living—he lifted his hands to heaven—he wept for the misery of such as fell before his eyes—he cried—he wrestled—and his prayer was heard, the plague was stopped, and the sword of God's anger retired. A good pastor never prays for his people in vain. "And Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed."

This, my brethren, is the image of a good pastor. Among his people (as I may say) he walks between the dead and the living. He sees by his side some of his flock dead, and others ready to expire, having only some flattering signs of life. He sees the invisible sword of God's wrath hang over these people; he sees reigning crimes and hastening death. All this he beholds, and it is a spectacle, which he has every day before his eyes. If he is not affected with this, he is not a pastor, he is a mercenary wretch, who sees in cold blood the destruction of his flock. He is either a minister fallen from the grace of the priesthood, or one who has never received it. But if this affects him, ah! what must the first motion of his grief and zeal be? He will address himself to God, who wounds and heals; he will open to him secret tears of grief and love to his people; he will remind an angry God of his ancient mercies; he will move his paternal

evated are admiration of the majesty of God, the ways of providence, the glory of Paradise, the expectation of benefits &c.

There are some christian passions which may be excited either by a tender, or violent method. Repentance is of this kind; for which extremely tender motives may be employed, as the love, and bounty of God, which we have so unworthily treated. Violent motives may also be used, as censure, an enumeration and description of the enormity of the sins reigning among us, the horror of our ingratitude, the fear of God's judgments, the justice of his scourges, and chastisements, &c.

In like manner, firmness against temptations may be discussed; for tender motives may be used, as—the vanity of the promises and hopes of this world, which are only false, and delusive appearances; the consideration of the miserable state of backsliders, and apostates; the dignity to which God calls his children; the eternal rewards, which attend perseverance; the joy of a good man when he has gained a signal victory over temptations. Violent methods may also be employed, as—inspiring an holy ambition to defeat the designs of the world; a contempt of the plots, and powers against us; the hope, or rather the inviolable assurance we have,

heart by his sighs; and offer himself to be *accursed* (Rom. ix. 3.) for his brethren. "Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed."

No, my brethren, a priest, a pastor who does not pray, who does not love prayer, does not belong to that church which *prays without ceasing*. He is not united to the spirit of prayer and love. He is a dry and barren tree, which cumbers the Lord's ground. He is the enemy, and not the father of his people. He is a stranger who has usurped the pastor's place, and to whom the salvation of the flock is indifferent. Wherefore my brethren, be faithful in prayer, and your functions will be more useful, your people more holy, your labours will seem much sweeter, and the church's evils will diminish.

MASSIL. *Disc. Synod. Tom.* ii. *Disc.* 10.

that all the powers of earth joined together cannot shake us. St. Paul uses mixed motives at the end of the eighth of Romans. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

* *Conclusion may be mixed.* Example of a mixed conclusion from MASSILLON. The annihilation of the soul is the last resource of impiety. But what punishment would it be for a wicked man to be no more? He wishes for annihilation, and proposes it as his highest hope. He lives tranquil in the midst of his pleasures in this agreeable expectation. What! will the just God punish a sinner by giving him what he desires? Ah! it is not thus that God punishes. For what can the wicked find so very bad in annihilation? Would it be the privation of God? But a wicked man does not love him, he does not know him, he will not know him, for his god is himself. Would it be annihilation? But what more pleasing to such a monster, who knows that if he lives after death, it is only to suffer, and expiate the horrors of an abominable life. Would it be the loss of worldly pleasures, and of all the objects of his passions? But when he ceases to be, he must cease to live. Imagine if you can a more desirable lot for the wicked, and shall this after all be the sweet end of his debaucheries, horrors and blasphemies!

No, my brethren, *the hope of the wicked shall perish:* but his crimes shall not perish with him. His torments will be as endless as his pleasures would have been, if he had been master of his fate. He would fain perpetuate upon earth his sensual pleasures; death limits his crimes, but does not limit his criminal desires. The just Judge, who searches the heart, will proportion then the suffering to the offence; immortal flames for intentionally immortal pleasures, and eternity itself will only be a just compensation, and an equality of punishment. *These shall go away into everlasting punishment.*

What is the conclusion of this discourse?—That a wicked man is to be pitied for placing his highest hope in a frightful uncertainity about revealed truths. He is to be pitied, in that he is not able to live peaceably, unless he lives without faith, without worship, without God, without hope; that he is to be pitied if the gospel must be a fable, the faith of all ages credulity, the consent of all men a popular error, the first principles of nature and reason childish prejudices, the blood of so many martyrs, whom the hope of a futurity supported in tor-

A conclusion should be *diversified.* I mean, we should not be content to move one single christian passion; many must be touched, and a proper length of discourse assigned to each, in order to stir up the passion. Too long time, however, must not be spent; but when the effect is evidently produced, pass to another passion. As the conclusion ought to be composed at least of four, or five reflections, (naturally arising from the text, either general, from the whole text, or particular, from some of the parts, into which it is divided,) so, if possible these reflections must be placed in prudent order, so that the weakest and least powerful may be the first, and the strongest last, and so that the discourse may become more rapid as it runs.

I think, however, it would be vicious to finish with motives too violent, as subjects tending to horror, indignation, or heavy censure. It would be much better, in general, to close with a tender, or even with an elevating

ments, a concerted scheme to deceive mankind; the conversion of the universe a human enterprize; the accomplishment of prophecies a lucky hit; in one word, if all that is best established in the universe must be found false, so that he may not be eternally miserable. What madness to be able to contrive a kind of tranquillity made up of so many foolish suppositions?

O man! *I will show you a more excellent way.* Fear this futurity, which you force yourself to doubt. Ask us no more what passes in that other life, of which we speak; but ask yourself frequently what you are doing in this. Calm your conscience by the innocence of your manners, and not by the impiety of your sentiments. Set your heart at rest by calling upon God, and not by doubting whether he sees you. The peace of the wicked is only a frightful despair; seek your happiness, not in shaking off the yoke of faith, but in tasting how sweet it is. Practice the maxims it prescribes, and your reason will no longer refuse to submit to the mysteries it proposes. Futurity will cease to be incredible to you, when you cease to live like those that confine all their felicity within the bounds of life. Then far from fearing the futurity, you will hasten to it in desire, you will sigh after the happy day, when the Son of Man, the Father of the world to come, will appear to punish infidels, and to receive into his kingdom all such as have lived in expectation of a blessed immortality.

MASSIL. *Ser. Car. Tom.* i.

motive. Different motives may be (and indeed they ought to be) mixed in the same conclusion, that is, violent, tender, and elevated, in order to stir up many passions of different kinds.

Conclusion sometimes delights in examples, similitudes, short and weighty sentences, the inventions of a fine imagination, and, in one word, it need not be either so chaste, or so regular as the body of the sermon, where more accuracy must be observed. There is no danger when a preacher in a conclusion gives himself up to the fire of his genius, provided he say nothing extravagant or capricious, nothing that savours of enthusiasm or declamation.*

* To this purpose Bishop Burnet observes, "Artificial eloquence, without a flame within, is like artificial poetry; all its productions are forced, and unnatural, and in a great measure ridiculous. Art helps, and guides nature; but, if one was not born with this flame, art will only spoil, and make him redundant. A man must have in himself a deep sense of the truth and power of religion. He must have a life and flame in his thoughts with relation to these subjects. He must have felt in himself those things, which he intends to explain, and recommends to others. There is an authority in the simplest things that can be said, when they carry visible characters of genuineness in them." *Past. care*, c. ix.

Give attendance to reading, exhortation, and doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee. Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them. Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine, continue in them; for, in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. Paul to Tim.

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GREGORY

ON THE COMPOSITION AND DELIVERY OF

A SERMON.

ON THE

COMPOSITION AND DELIVERY

OF A

SERMON.

I do not know any species of composition, which is more deserving of critical attention, than that, which is appropriated to the pulpit; and I will add, that I do not know any which appears to want it more. That it is from its nature liable to very great abuses, and at no time since the apostolic age has been free from error, must be allowed by every person conversant in the literary history of the church; but, of late years, so depraved a taste has been introduced by the love of novelty, and the admission of illiterate persons into holy orders, that the keenest inspection of criticism is become necessary to reduce to order the extravagancies of pulpit empiricism. A few observations, therefore, having occurred to my recollection, and conceiving that this volume might probably be read by some of the younger clergy, as well as by a few of the religious part of the laity, I determined to embrace the opportunity of presenting them to the public.

The utility of these remarks, however, may possibly not be altogether confined to one species of composition. What I have to advance, with respect to style in particular, will, I flatter myself, not be unacceptable to young writers in general: indeed, every attempt to refine the taste, and to exercise the judgment, is generally found of advantage beyond the sphere of its immediate intention.

As I do not pretend to exhibit a complete view of the subject, I have entitled this attempt, "Thoughts on the Composition and Delivery of a Sermon." But, as desultory maxims or precepts are seldom of much use, I have endeavoured to reduce my sentiments to some kind of order; and (after stating in general terms the *rise* and *progress* of *this species* of *oratory in the christian church*) the grand divisions, which I mean to adopt, will be, the *choice of a subject*, the *arrangement*, and the *style:* to which I mean to add a few cursory observations respecting *manner* or *delivery.**

* The design of Christian oratory (says St. Augustin) is either to instruct men in the truth, to refute their errors, or to persuade them to the practice of virtue, and an abhorrence of vice. The first requires plain narration; the second, strength of argument and ratiocination; and the third, the art of moving the mind and affections. As the Christian orator speaks that only which is holy, just, and good, he endeavours to speak in such a manner, that he may be heard with understanding, with pleasure, and with effect.—That he may be heard with understanding, he speaks with plainness and perspicuity, and a regard to the capacities and knowledge of his hearers; that he may be heard with pleasure, he will pay such attention to the common rules of eloquence, as to endeavour to speak with acuteness, elegance, and strength; and, that he may be heard with effect, he will labour to persuade and to convince his auditors of the truth and importance of his doctrines.

Aug. de Doctrin. Christo, l. 4. c. 4.
Idem, l. 4. c. 15. Idem, l. 4. c. 5.
Idem, l. 4. c. 12.

I.

OF THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF PULPIT ORATORY.

In the primitive church a custom prevailed, which may be ultimately traced into the Jewish;* though the time of its introduction into the latter is not very easily ascertained. The bishop or presbyter, who read the portion of Scripture selected for the day, concluded that part of the service with a general explanation of what had been read, and with earnestly exhorting the audience to profit from the instructions, or to imitate the example, which had then been exhibited.† These exhortations were brief and unadorned, and were sometimes accompanied with other explications of Scripture, which were successively delivered by those of the society, who declared themselves under the peculiar influence of the Spirit; while their prophetic brethren, who were present in the assembly, decided upon the respect which was due to their authority.‡ It is probable that what at first consisted only of a few short and perhaps unconnected sentences would gradually, and by those who possessed fluency of thought and facility of expression, be made to assume a more regular form.§ Origen was the first who introduced long explanatory discourses into Christian assemblies; and preaching in his time began to be formed upon the nice rules of Grecian eloquence.

The great superiority of these studied and regular

* See Luke iv. 16, 17. xx. 1. xxi. 37. John viii. 20. Acts xiii. 13.

† Justin. Apol. 2, p. 98.

‡ Mosheim, Cent. 1, Part 2, Chap. 4.

§ Mosh. Cent. 3, Part 2, Chap. 4.

compositions over extempore effusions soon excluded the latter almost entirely from the service of the church, though at some periods we find them occasionally resorted to. Origen,* the great father of pulpit-oratory, at above sixty years of age, and when by continued use and exercise he had acquired great facility both in composition and delivery, began to indulge himself in the practice of extempore oratory. The custom, however, was not confined to him. Cyril and several of his contemporaries addressed their respective audiences in unprepared discourses, which the diligence of the public notaries of the church has preserved from oblivion; and many of the sermons of Chrysostom, together with his celebrated discourse upon his return from banishment, are proofs not only of the existence of the custom, but that extempore compositions are not necessarily deficient either in elegance or method. It is probable, however, that, at a time when nice and determined rules had been formed for pulpit-oratory, few would attempt extempore addresses, except upon sudden and particular emergencies, and then they would be attempted by such only as previous habits of study and recitation had peculiarly qualified for the practice. Of those which have reached posterity, we know that many, and probable the greater part, received the after corrections of their respective authors.†

However diminutive and simple in its origin, preaching very soon came to be considered as a principal part

* Euseb. lib. 6. c. 36.

† At the Reformation in England, many complaints were made of those, who were licensed to preach; and that they might be able to justify themselves, they began generally to write and read their sermons; the manifest superiority of this mode over extempore preaching has continued it in the church of England ever since. See BURNETT'S *Hist. Reform.* Vol. I. p. 317.

of public worship. Sometimes two or three sermons* were preached in the same assembly by the presbyters and bishops in succession; and, when two or more bishops happened to be present, it was usual for them to preach after each other, reserving the last place for the most eminent person. The sermons upon these occasions were necessarily short, as the time limited for public worship was only two hours. It was probably upon some of these occasions that the short sermons of St. Augustin were composed, many of which may be pronounced distinctly, and delivered in eight minutes, and a few in almost half that time.

The general regard, which was paid to preaching, as a necessary part of public worship, is evident from its having formed a part of the discipline of every Christian church, except that of Rome, in which, as Sozomen informs us,† at the time he wrote no such custom existed. Sermons were however again introduced into that church by Leo, but again discontinued, till, after an interval of more than five hundred years, Pius V. once more made them a necessary part of public worship.

As the institution of preaching commenced in the explication of Scripture, it still retained, through the many revolutions of the public taste, some respect to its origin; and, with a few exceptions, a portion of the sacred writings always constituted the basis of the discourse;‡ though latterly it was reduced almost to the form of a motto, which had frequently but little con-

* Bingham's Eccl. Antiq. book 14. c. 4.

† Sozom. lib. 7. c. 19.

‡ Some of the homilies of Chrysostom were preached without a text. CHRYS. *Hom. Post. Red.* 3, 4, 5, 6. &c. Melancthon heard a priest at Paris, who took his text from Aristotle's Ethics.

nexion with the principal subject. From this state of facts we may easily perceive the source of those two modes of exhortation, which now prevail in the church; I mean the simply explanatory, and the didactic or essay style. Both have their particular uses, and perhaps neither ought to be uniformly preferred.

II.

OF THE CHOICE OF A SUBJECT.

However custom may have indulged the Christian orator with respect to the modes in which he is to convey instruction, still, in the choice of a subject, young preachers will do well to advert in general to the origin of the institution; to consider that its immediate design is the exposition of Scripture. And, though I see no reason for excluding utterly from the pulpit those discourses, which treat of the virtues and vices in an abstract and philosophical manner; yet I confess, that sermon, which follows the order of the text, appears more immediately consistent with the design, and more correspondent to the nature of the composition.

For the same reason, I am induced to prefer those discourses, which tend to remove the difficulties, and elucidate the obscurities of the Scriptures. I do not wish to be understood, as recommending any tedious philological disquisitions, any laborious collations, or those exercises, which are obviously only calculated for the closet. It is difficult to command the attention of a common congregation, be the matter ever so plain and practical. It would therefore be scarcely less absurd to introduce mathematical calculations than such disquisitions as these.

I am still more offended with those preachers, who

regularly pay their audience the unwelcome compliment of supposing their faith in continual danger of invasion; and conceive it absolutely necessary to be constantly insisting on the proofs of revelation. The persons, to whom alone such reasoning can be of use, take care very seldom to throw themselves in its way; and, as Swift remarks, can any thing be more absurd, "than, for the sake of three or four fools, who are past grace, to perplex the minds of well disposed people with doubts, which probably would never have otherwise come into their minds?"

The church of God was never intended as a school of speculation, or a place to indulge the licentiousness of fancy in doubtful disputation. It is a wretched abuse of time to bewilder our hearers in the nice distinctions of the schoolmen, in the explanation of mysteries, which perhaps are not to be explained, or which at least require much previous study, and call for all the advantages of solitude, and of leisure, to enable the mind to comprehend or to follow the tenour of the argument.

But, the most absurd and useless of all discourses are those, which treat of questions absolutely removed beyond the sphere of our knowledge. Such are many sermons concerning the manner of the divine existence; the state of the soul after death; the nature of the hypostatic union; the existence, the number of the angels, and the means of their communication; what would have been the state of Adam if the fall had never taken place; and abundance of other topics, which can only serve to gratify an idle and visionary humour of speculation, and can answer no practical end whatever.

In this place it may not be improper to remark, that all fantastical applications of Scripture are carefully to

be avoided. It is dangerous on any occasion to depart from the plain track of common sense; and there is no attempt at ingenuity so easy as that, which borders upon nonsense. Most of the French sermons are of this kind.* There is one of Massillon upon the story of the woman of Samaria, which will afford a tolerable specimen. "I find here," says the preacher, "three reasons for resisting the grace of Christianity: 1st, her station or condition; *How is it that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?* 2d, the difficulty; *the well is deep*, &c. 3d, the variety of opinions; *our fathers worshipped on this mountain*, &c." The heads of the discourse are extremely well chosen; but it is obvious, that the application of the text to them is mere trifling; a sport of the fancy in opposition to every principle of reason, and contrary to that seriousness and respect, with which the word of God ought ever to be treated.

Lastly. Unity and simplicity are in every case essential to perfection. A sermon must have one determinate end and object; must be confined to the explaining of a single doctrine, or the enforcing of some one virtue. An accumulation of thought always oppresses the human mind; and, where there are too many arguments or

* Those critics, whose complaisance or whose indolence has induced them to take their opinion of Gallic eloquence from the critics of that nation, have rashly assigned the preference to the oratory of the French pulpit. I have gone through the drudgery of perusing all the most celebrated of their preachers; and I will not hesitate to declare, that, except a sermon or two of Massillon, there are scarcely any which deserve, I will not say to be compared with the English preachers, but to be read at all. They are in general written, indeed, in a style of animated rhetoric, but altogether in a bad taste. They abound in points, antitheses, and conceits. But, their great defect is a poverty of matter. It is difficult, through the mass of words, to find any ideas at all; and when you have found them, as Gratiano says, "they are not worth the search."

precepts, there is a great chance that none of them will be remembered.* Those preachers, who attempt to crowd the whole duty of a man, moral and religious, into a single sermon, can only be compared to their brethren of the laity, who pretend to cure all diseases by a single nostrum. By thus attempting to give you every thing, they in fact give you nothing; and we find that, however they vary their texts, the sermon is always the same; the same trite chain of general sentiments, without any specific or useful instruction whatever.

By recommending an attention to the origin of the institution, I may seem to have insinuated, that a long text is generally preferable to a short one. I have however found it otherwise by experience, and have seldom known the former either useful or agreeable. A long text frequently involves such a number of propositions as must effectually destroy the unity of a discourse; besides, that a text, when well-chosen, and not too long, will commonly be remembered, and of itself will make a distinct and useful impression on the hearers.

The contrary error is, however, still more reprehensible. It is one of the mean artifices of barren genius, to surprise the audience with a text consisting of one or two words. I have heard of a person of this description, who preached from the words "Jehovah Jireh," and another, from the monosyllable "But."† These are contemptible devices, more adapted to the moving

* "Propose one point in one discourse, and stick to it; a hearer never carries away more than one impression." PALEY'S *Ordination Sermon.*

† He perhaps might justify himself upon the same principle with Dr. Eachard's divine, who made AND one of the heads of his discourse, adding; "this word is but a particle, and a small one; but small things are not to be despised; Matt. xviii. 10; *Take heed that ye despise not one of these* LITTLE *ones.*" *Contempt of the Clergy*, p. 82.

theatre of the mountebank than to the pulpit, and can only serve to captivate the meanest and most ignorant of the vulgar.*

III.

OF ARRANGEMENT.

With respect to *arrangement*, it will also be necessary to have some regard to what has been remarked concerning the origin of preaching. It is evident that, when a sermon is explanatory or illustrative of Scripture, it ought to follow the order and spirit of the text. When it is not so, it must follow that order, which is dictated by sound logic, and the laws of composition. There are some texts, which contain several members, or inferior propositions; such is that of Micah vi. 8; "What is required of thee, O man, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Such is that of St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii; "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself," &c. and these naturally divide themselves. Though I think young preachers ought to be cautioned rather to follow the order of the sense than of the words. Again, there are some texts, which as it were carry the preacher along with the course of the narrative; of this we have an example in Massillon's sermon on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. Some texts, according to the nature of the subject, will only admit of two divis-

* "Never choose such texts as have not a complete sense; for, only impertinent and foolish people will attempt to preach from one or two words, which signify nothing." *Claude, c.* i.

"Give me a serious preacher, (says Fenelon,) who speaks for my sake, and not for his own."

ions, even when they seem to contain more parts or members; for instance, Bishop Taylor's famous sermon on Matt. xvi. 26; "What shall a man profit, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Here the preacher divides his sermon into two parts; and first inquires into the value of the world, and how far a man may be profited by the possession of it; and, secondly, he inquires into the nature and value of a soul, and the loss to be sustained in parting with it.*

There are, however, texts, which contain only one simple proposition. In this case, the sermon assumes the form of an essay: and the judgment of the author must direct him to that arrangement, which appears most commodious. For instance, if the purpose of the discourse be to recommend the practice of some moral virtue, the preacher may first state its general utility to mankind; afterwards its necessity, according to the law of God; and, lastly, he may enforce it in a particular address to his hearers, founded on the preceding arguments.

The sermons of the last century in general consisted of too many divisions. The hearers were bewildered

* Sermons will perhaps admit of another classification. 1. When the discourse is altogether an explanation or elucidation of the text. 2. When a practical application is to be drawn from the text. And, 3. When both these objects are united; and I apprehend it will be found the most acceptable mode of preaching on doctrinal texts, or those, which require explanation, to endeavour towards the close of the discourse, to draw some practical inference from it.

Vitringa's rules, for preaching on doctrinal texts, are—"1. State the doctrine clearly. 2. Prove and illustrate it by parallel texts; and, if possible, by reasoning. 3. Vindicate it, if you think any of your auditors deny it. 4. Bring it home to the heart." Robinson's Claude, Vol. I. p. 402.

"The Sermons of the third century (says Mr. Robinson) are divisible into three general parts. 1. A short introduction. 2. An exposition of the text. And, last, a moral exhortation arising out of the discussion." Ibid.

in pursuing the arrangement of the preacher, and lost the sentiments while they were attending to the order of the discourse. There are indeed some sermons, which only deserve the name of heads of an oration. The moderns have fallen into an opposite extreme, namely, a total neglect of order and method. Common sense points out a middle course: it is obvious, that a few natural and easy divisions assist the memory; while it is commonly perplexed and confused by too many.

Thus far as to the arrangement of sermons in particular; but there is an arrangement, or order, of a general nature, which must be attended to in every composition; and is absolutely necessary to be observed in those discourses, which are founded upon such texts as contain a simple proposition, and therefore treat of the virtues or vices, or of the particular doctrines of religion in an abstract manner, and without any regard to the literal order of the text. Perhaps the simplest division is that of Aristotle,* into, the *exordium*, which introduces the speaker and the subject; the *proposition*, which explains the design of the oration; the *proof*, or argument, which supports it; and the *conclusion*, which applies it directly to the audience.

I. With respect to the *exordium*, or introduction, the first rule is, that it be very *clear*. For, as the intent of it is to prepare the minds of the hearers, if any thing abstruse or paradoxical occur, there will be some danger of alienating their minds in such a manner, that they will probably not be able to recover their attention during the whole discourse. For this reason, long sentences ought to be avoided, as they are apt to perplex the understanding, as well as to fatigue the ear, and run the

* Rhet. l. iii. c. 13.

speaker out of breath before he is properly entered upon his subject.

In the second place, an exordium should always be cool, temperate, and modest. The exordium of Sterne to his sermon on the house of mourning,—"That I deny,"—is a paltry artifice, unworthy the imitation of any man of taste or genius. Indeed I know no author so likely as Sterne to corrupt the style and taste of his readers; all his writings are full of trick and affectation, (the very opposite of those chaste models of eloquence which antiquity has transmitted to us,) and are at best only calculated to excite the momentary admiration of the unthinking part of mankind.

Thirdly. It is remarked by Cicero, that a commonplace exordium, such as the following, "Happiness is the great end and aim of all human pursuits," is generally a token of a barren genius, and has therefore a very ill effect. As the whole oration is necessarily confined within very narrow limits, that exordium, which leads most directly to the subject, is certainly to be preferred.

Fourthly. An exordium should be agreeable and easy. The pleasing is absolutely necessary to conciliate the good opinion of every audience.

Fifthly. I would recommend brevity as a particular excellence on the present occasion. It was the usual custom of the old divines to introduce their discourses by a long historical or explanatory exordium, setting forth the state and circumstances of the person to whom the text related, &c. &c., which was nothing more than retailing the history of the Bible, in language always inferior, and frequently very indifferent and homely; as our

auditors, however, are not quite so patient, these tedious introductions are necessarily and properly laid aside.*

I would wish one point to be particularly adverted to in this place; and that is, that the eloquence of the pulpit is essentially different from that of political assemblies. In the latter it may be proper, and is probably sometimes absolutely necessary, to preface a motion or argument by some account of the speaker and his motives. In the pulpit, there can be nothing so disgusting, so impertinent, and so vulgar, as egotism. The preacher should never appear himself; he is only the representative of another; he comes to explain the word of God, and not to sacrifice to his own vanity. The long introductions of Cicero or Demosthenes are, therefore, not to be imitated by pulpit orators.

II. The necessity of acquainting the audience with the design of the speaker is so obvious, that little need be urged on the subject of the *propositive* part of a discourse. If any definitions of terms be required, (as may be the case, when the text is liable to be misunderstood, or when some material doctrine depends upon the interpretation of that passage of Scripture,) it will be proper to introduce them in this part; since, if deferred to the middle or the conclusion, they may chance to prove soporiferous. In truth, I do not know any thing more disgusting than insisting too much on the definition of

* Brevity, in every part of a composition designed for the pulpit, appears to have been at all times a considerable *desideratum* with great numbers of the people. Frequent exhortations, to hear patiently the word of God, occur in the writings of the fathers, and various stratagems were used to detain their auditors till the close of the service, even so far as to lock the doors of the church and confine them. These ingenious devices were inforced by ecclesiastical laws; and the 4th council of Carthage enacted, that those, who showed a contempt for the discourses of their teachers should be excommunicated from the church.

Cyprian Vit. Cæsar, c. 12. *Conc. Carth.* 4. Can. 24.

single terms. M. Claude, who appears in general to have had very just notions of preaching, errs greatly against simplicity in this respect. In one of the outlines of sermons, which he exhibits as models, from a single expression in the text, "Whoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross," he takes occasion to introduce a long dissertation on sanctification, another on affliction; and the plan of the discourse, according to his arrangement, contains the substance of at least four moderate sermons.

III. The *proofs*, or argumentative part, must entirely depend upon the nature of the subject. There is an excellent collection of topics upon moral subjects in Aristotle's Rhetoric; but Bishop Wilkins' Ecclesiastes, or Gift of Preaching, is one of the most ingenious books that I have seen for the assistance of young preachers.

I cannot pass this opportunity without again recommending, in the strongest terms, an attention to *unity*. Without this, a composition (if indeed it deserve the name) can never be useful; and least of all a composition which is to be heard, and not studied. A good sermon must have a single object, the more simple the better; and every part of the discourse must tend to impress this object forcibly on the mind. It is almost unnecessary to add, that a judicious preacher will form a sort of climax in his reasoning, and reserve his most forcible arguments for the last. The argument ought also to be full and pointed. I have heard sermons, in which, after the principal matter was closed, a tail, or codicil, containing something not very essential to the subject, succeeded, which, like Pope's Alexandrine,

———"dragg'd its slow length along."

There is a very good receipt for sermon-making in

M. Claude's Essay on that subject. I would even advise the unpractised student to adopt occasionally some of his topics, and form them into sermons, in the order which he has prescribed; this exercise will tend to give him just notions of method, and a facility in arranging his ideas: and will not only be more improving, but more creditable than the usual practice of transcribing printed sermons.

Another practice, which I would recommend to young divines, is, before they sit down to compose a sermon, to read some of the best authors, who have treated of the same subject; to close the books, and endeavour to throw the matter into that order, which appeared most perspicuous and pleasing. Reading different authors upon the subject will give a variety to their ideas; and, by writing without the books before them, the expression will at least be their own.

If, however, the young preacher be altogether diffident of his own powers; not willing to hazard original composition, and yet desirous of improvement; let him take the substance of his discourse from some approved commentary on the Scriptures, and occasionally enliven the explication by some remarks of his own. Let him draw a few practical inferences at the conclusion; and this will not only improve him in the knowledge of the Scriptures, but will gradually exercise his judgment, and form his taste for composition.

I must add, that most of the proofs, which Christian preachers introduce, ought to be scriptural proofs.—If they preach morality, it must be the morality of the Gospel. Unless a sincere and fervent strain of piety pervade the whole composition, it will not, nor indeed ought it to meet with general regard. The sermons of

Archbishop Secker are deserving of high commendation in this respect; but the most perfect models are to be found in a volume lately published by an amiable and accomplished prelate of our church.*

IV. The CONCLUSION of a sermon should not (indeed, considering the present length of discourses, must not) be prolix. It ought in general to be practical; and it is obvious, that it requires a more animated style than any other part of the composition. I do not know a more useful form for a concluding address, than that which consists of a recapitulation of the principal matter of the sermon; indeed, if the subject be not very plain and obvious, such a conclusion is absolutely necessary. It serves not only to recal all the useful and striking passages to the minds of the audience, but gives them a clearer view of the whole than they would otherwise have, and impresses it on the memory.† Variety is however necessary; and, I confess, I do not know so great a blemish in Dr. Ogden's excellent sermons, as a want of variety in their conclusions. If the peroration do not consist of a recapitulation, it ought at least to proceed naturally and regularly from the subject.

On the whole, it is practice only, which can impart facility and method in the arrangement of our ideas. Rules can only serve to restrain the irregularities of the imagination. It would be impossible, in such a dissertation as the present, or indeed in any work of criticism,

* The practice here recommended has been the *torpedo* of the English pulpit. EDITOR.

† It would not be easy for the popular preachers of the day to adopt this form, as their compositions are mere farragos, collected from all quarters of the globe, with no unity of subject, no regard to text, no express object whatever in view. I speak not of extempore preachers, since method is hardly to be expected from them. I speak of those who pretend to write, and would be thought very profound theologians.

to furnish thoughts or sentiments. Since Mr. Addison recommended the practice, it is become very common among the clergy to preach from the sermons of approved authors, either by abridging them, or sometimes by transcribing them entire. The practice is, in my opinion, more for the benefit of the audience, than of the clergy themselves, though the former are the only persons likely to complain.* What person of common sense, indeed, would not rather hear a sermon of Sherlock, of Secker, of Porteus, or of Blair, than the trite and unconnected jargon, with which we are generally assailed by the most popular preachers in the metropolis? If these men (whose voices are generally good, and whose manner, if not quite so affected, might be rather conciliating) would, in the room of their own bombast, favour their auditors with a good printed sermon, they would find that they might, in general, pass undetected, and their exhibitions would not be so uniformly disgusting as they are to persons of taste and erudition.

The most formidable objection against the use of printed sermons, is, that it removes the younger clergy out of the way of improvement, and probably produces a habit of indolence. When, however, they do not compose their own discourses, I would advise them to apply to approved authors, rather than to obscure or indifferent writers, as is frequently done to avoid discovery. It is much better to be sometimes detected, than to tire an audience by continually preaching indifferent matter; and the observation is but too true, that, where there is

* This practice is so far from novel, that it is of considerable antiquity in the church. Augustin rather commended than blamed those preachers, who, when conscious of their own inability to compose well, availed themselves of the performances of others. *Aug. Doctrin. Christ. l.* 4. *c.* 29.

not genius to compose, there is seldom judgment to select.

IV.

OF STYLE.

The third object, which I proposed to treat of in this dissertation, is *style.* I must however premise, that in the compositions for the pulpit, as well as in every other, unless there be a ground work of good sense and argument, unless there be solidity of reasoning and energy of sentiment, all the graces of style will be accumulated in vain.

The essentials of a good style, at least as far as regards the present subject, may be reduced to three: *perspicuity*, *purity*, and a moderate portion of *ornament.*

I. PERSPICUITY is the first excellence of style; indeed I do not know so decisive a proof of genius. A smooth and polished diction, or pompous figures, are frequently the achievements of dullness; but it is the characteristic of genius alone to flash conviction and instruction on the minds of the audience.* Perspicuity will depend, in the first place, on the *choice of words;* and, secondly, on the *arrangement of them.*

As far as regards the *choice of words*, obscurity results, in the first place,

From obsolete or affected language, which is not generally understood. No person of taste would wish at present to imitate the language of our liturgy in the use of the word *prevent*,—"Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings;" nor in that of the word *after*,—"O Lord, re-

* "By perspicuity, (says Quintilian,) care is taken, not that the hearer may understand, if he will; but, that he must understand, whether he will or not."

ward us not after our iniquities." Many abuses of words have been introduced from the French idiom: Lord Bolingbroke, for instance, says, "by the persons I *intend* here," instead of I *mean*.—Analogous to this is the use of Latinisms, as *integrity* to denote *entireness*, *conscience* for *consciousness*: "The *conscience* of approving one's self a benefactor to mankind is the noblest recompense for being so."

Again, obscurity proceeds from the use of ambiguous or indefinite words. Examples of this occur in the following sentences: "As for such animals as are *mortal*, (or noxious,) we have a right to destroy them." "The Christians rudely disturbed the *service* of paganism; and, rushing in crowds round the tribunals of the magistrates, called upon them to pronounce and inflict the sentence of the law." Here it is not easy to define what *service* is meant, whether civil or religious. A similar ambiguity may be found in the same author. Speaking of the cruelty of Valentinian, the historian adds:—"The merit of Maximin, who has slaughtered the noblest families of Rome, was rewarded with the royal approbation and the prefecture of Gaul. Two fierce and enormous bears, distinguished by the appellations of Innocence and Micaaurea, could alone deserve to *share* the favour of Maximin." It is evident that we must have recourse to the context to understand that these creatures were not the favourites of Maximin, but of Valentinian. A writer on criticism has the following sentence:—"There appears to be a remarkable difference between *one of the first* of ancient and of modern critics." The embarrassment of this sentence would have been entirely avoided by inserting the words *one of the first* a second time, which probably an apprehension of offending the ear prevented.

The cases are so very numerous, in which an ill choice of words, or an imprudent use of them, may darken the expression, that it would be almost impossible to prescribe any definite rules upon the subject.—Perfection in this respect is only to be acquired by practice. Possibly the following remarks may be of some use to young writers. First. Endeavour to inform yourself perfectly concerning the etymology and meaning of words. Secondly. Consult the best modern authors, and observe their different applications. The original sense is not always a certain guide in the use of common words; though, if nicely attended to, it will sometimes help us to the reasons of their application. Thirdly. Be not too anxious for variety of expression. It is well observed by the Abbe Girard, that when a performance grows dull, it is not so much, because the ear is tired by the frequent repetition of the same sound, as because the mind is fatigued by the frequent recurrence of the same idea. Lastly. We cannot be too much on our guard against the vulgar idiom. Most writers who affect ease and familiarity in writing are apt to slide into it.

> "But ease in writing flows from art, not chance,
> "As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance."

That ambiguity, as well as inaccuracy, is not uncommonly the effect of introducing the vulgar phraseology into written composition, is evident from the very incorrect and absurd use of the active verb *to lay*, instead of the neuter verb *to lie*. This solecism has arisen I presume from confounding the past tense of the latter with the present of the former verb. Let it be observed, however, that when a noun follows in the objective case, the verb active (to lay) may be used; as, to *lay down* an

employment; and sometimes when the verb is reflected; as,

"Soft on the flow'ry herb I found *me laid*."

But, to say "Death *lays* upon her like an untimely frost," or to say "I have a work *laying* by me, would be a gross and intolerable barbarism.

Perspicuity is injured by bad *arrangement*, in the following instances.

1st. By separating the adjective from its proper substantive; "they chose to indulge themselves in the hour of *natural* festivity."—Better "in the *natural* hour of festivity."

2dly. By using the same pronoun in reference to different persons or things in the same sentence; "and *they* did all eat and were filled; and *they* took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full." By the last *they* it is difficult to say who are meant, the multitude or only the disciples. The following sentences are faulty on account of an indiscreet use of the relative. Speaking of Porto Bello; "this celebrated harbour, *which* was formerly very well defended by forts, *which* Admiral Vernon destroyed in 1740, seems to afford an entrance 600 toises broad; but is so straitened with rocks that are near the surface of the water, that it is reduced to a very narrow channel." Better thus: "this celebrated harbour was defended, &c." "It seems to afford, &c." "This activity drew great numbers of enterprising men over to Virginia, who came either in search of *fortune*, or of *liberty*, *which* is the only compensation for the want of *it*:" here the two antecedents are so confounded, that it requires a pause to distinguish them, and the construction is very ungraceful as well as obscure. One mode of avoiding ambiguity in this case

will be, when two antecedents occur, putting one of them, if possible in the plural, and the other in the singular number.

3dly. Obscurity is produced by separating the adverb and the adjective, or the adverb and the verb. Ex. "A power is requisite of fixing the intellectual eye upon successive objects so steadily, as that the *more* may never prevent us from doing justice to the *less* important." "His subject is precisely of that kind, which a daring imagination could *alone* have adopted:" here it is not accurately defined whether a daring imagination *only* could have adopted, &c. or whether it could have adopted that subject *only*, and no other. "He conjured the senate, that the purity of his reign might not be stained by the blood *even* of a guilty senator;" the arrangement would be more perfect, "by the blood of even a guilty senator." "He atoned for the murder of an innocent son, by the execution, perhaps, of a guilty wife;" the doubt in this sentence may apply to the reality of the execution. "Their intimacy had commenced in the happier period, *perhaps*, of their youth and obscurity."

4thly. The following is an example of ambiguity arising from the wrong position of a conjunction. The historian, speaking of an impolitic edict of Julian, thus expresses himself; "He enacted *that*, in a time of scarcity, it (corn) should be sold at a price, which had seldom been known in the most plentiful years." A common reader would infer from the above, that it was a standing order, that corn should in every time of scarcity be sold cheaper than in a time of plenty, which does not appear from the context to be the intention of the author. Speaking of parents misjudging of the conduct of schoolmasters, a modern author on education adds; "It

has broke* the peace of many an ingenuous man, who had engaged in the care of youth, and paved the way to the ruin of hopeful boys. It is not perfectly clear whether the circumstance or the master "paved the way, &c." It is impossible to decipher the following sentence. Respecting the Pennsylvania marble, of which chimney-pieces, tables, &c. are made, the historian adds; "These valuable materials could not have been found in common in the houses, *unless* they had been lavished in the churches."

5thly. Perspicuity is injured very frequently by the fear of concluding a sentence with a trifling word; but surely, however ungraceful, a confused style is a much greater blemish. "The court of chancery," says a respectable author, "frequently mitigates, and breaks "the teeth of the common law." From this sentence it might be inferred, that it *mitigated* the teeth. Better, therefore; frequently mitigates the common law, and breaks the teeth of it," or "its teeth."

6thly. It is an old observation, that the desire of brevity generally induces obscurity. This is exemplified in many forms of expression, to which habit serves to reconcile us, but which are in themselves really ambiguous. Thus we speak of "the reformation of Luther;" which, if the circumstance were not well understood, might mean the reformation of the man, instead of the reformation of the church.

7thly. An error opposite to this is long sentences and parentheses. Long periods, however, seldom create obscurity, when the natural order of thought is preserved; especially if each division, clause, or member of the sentence, be complete in itself. It is in general the in-

* *Broke* instead of *broken*, is bad grammar.

sertion of foreign matter, and parenthetical sentences, that confuse a style.

From these few observations concerning perspicuity, it will be sufficiently obvious, that the obscurity of some preachers does not result from the profundity and sublimity of their matter, (as they would wish us to believe,) nor yet altogether from a confusion of ideas, but frequently from a turbid and perplexed style. In general, however, we may safely lay it down as an incontrovertible maxim, that the sermon, which is not clear and intelligible, is the worst of sermons : since, however trite the matter, however vulgar the language, if it be understood, something may still be gleaned from it.

II. The second essential of a good style, which I pointed out, was *purity*, or elegance. The style of sermons, I am ready to grant, ought to be suited in general to the audience. But there is a certain style, which is adapted to people of almost all descriptions; that, I mean, which equally avoids technical and affected expressions, and those which are mean and vulgar. In pursuing this subject, that I may not fatigue the reader with new distinctions, I shall follow the method which I adopted in the former case, and shall first consider purity of style as relating to the choice of words; and, next, as to the arrangement of them.

The offences against *purity* of style, as far as respects the *choice of words*, may be reduced to the following heads. 1. *Obsolete* or uncommon expressions.* 2. *Vulgarisms.* 3. *Jargon*, or *cant.*

* In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold;
Alike fantastic, if too new or old.
Be not the first by whom the new are try'd,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside.

Ess. on Crit.

1. In an age of novelty we have very little to apprehend from obsolete expressions. Scarcely any person, who is at all conversant with polite company, would use such expressions as *behoof*, *behest*, *peradventure*, *sundry*, *anon*, &c. It is not a very easy matter to determine the era of pure English; but I think we should not look further back than the revolution: Hooker, Bacon, Milton, Hobbes, and even Temple, are scarcely to be considered as authorities in this respect.

Contrary to this, is the more fashionable error of using affected language, and particularly Gallicisms. This nation has been little indebted to the literature of France; and we have no occasion to change the bullion of our language for the tinsel of theirs. Dr. Campbell has, with great accuracy, collected a variety of these new imported phrases, which he very properly calls, "stray words, or exiles," that have no affinity to our language, and indeed are no better than insects of the day. It is of the utmost importance to literature to adopt some standard of language; there is no setting bounds to the liberty of coining words, if it be at all admitted; and, in that case, the invaluable productions of our ancestors will soon become totally unintelligible.

2. But the more dangerous vice, because it is the more common, and especially among the popular preachers of the day, is *vulgarity*. Some instances of this, however, are to be found in very approved authors, and seem to demonstrate how necessary it is to be on our guard against it. Lord Kaims speaks of the comedies of Aristophanes *wallowing* in looseness and detraction, (which is moreover a false metaphor; of "the *pushing* genius of a nation; of a nation being devoid of *bowels*," &c. The following phrase is surely intolerably low for serious com-

position: "To imagine that the gratifying of any sense, or the indulging of any delicacy in meat, drink, or apparel, is in itself a vice, can never *enter into a head* that is not disordered, &c." Dr. Beattie is not free from such expressions as "a *longwinded* rhetorician," "screaming and *squalling*," &c. and Dr. Blair speaks of a circumstance *popping out* upon us; of Milton having *chalked out* a new road in poetry; of Achilles *pitching upon* Briseïs, &c.—Perhaps nothing but good books and good company can purify the style from coarse and vulgar expressions; sometimes, indeed, the aptness of these words renders it difficult to reject them. When, however, we meet with a low word, we ought diligently to look for one synonymous to it. It would probably be a very improving exercise to make a collection as they occur, of choice and elegant expressions, which may be employed instead of the common and colloquial. Thus, for *heaping up*, we may use ACCUMULATING; for *shunned*, AVOIDED; for to *brag*, to BOAST; for their *betters* their SUPERIORS; for I *got rid of*, I AVOIDED. A polite writer, instead of saying he is *pushed on*, will say IMPELLED; instead of *go forwards*, or *go on*, PROCEED; instead of you *take me*, you UNDERSTAND; instead of I *had as lief*, I should LIKE AS WELL; instead of a *moot point*, a DISPUTED point; instead of *pro & con*, on BOTH SIDES; instead of *by the bye*, BY THE WAY, (though I do not much like either;) instead of *shut* our ears, CLOSE our ears; instead of *fell to work*, BEGAN. Some words it will be better to omit; as, instead of saying, "he has a considerable *deal* of merit," say, "he has considerable merit."

When an idiom can be avoided, and a phrase strictly grammatical introduced, the latter will always be most graceful; for instance, it is more elegant to say, "I

would rather," than " I *had* rather." This idiom probably took its rise from the abbreviation *I'd*, which in conversation stands equally for I *would*, or I *had*.

When a substitute cannot be found for a mean word, it is better to reform the sentence altogether, and to express it by a periphrasis; one such " fly will mar the ointment" of the most harmonious periods.

3. Nothing, however, can be more opposite to purity or elegance of style, than the unmeaning *jargon*, which low and illiterate preachers introduce, sometimes in order to assume an air of erudition.* Such phrases as *creaturely comforts; man-God; everlasting ubiquity; celestial panoply; Triune God;* &c. &c. are barbarisms not to be endured. Indeed, were I to detail the instances of this depraved phraseology, I should scarcely be less disgusting than those who employ it. Similar to these are the endearing diminutives, the compound epithets, such as *life-giving*, *soul-saving*, &c. and the fulsome repetition of the most sacred names, introduced by some preachers. *Unaffected* is an epithet, appropriated in a manner to real devotion, which is displayed in actions, and in sentiments, and not in words; indeed I do not know, whether the too frequent and familiar introduction of the most solemn expressions, even in the pulpit, may not serve to lessen, rather than to increase our respect for the great object of Christian worship.

Purity of style, as far as respects *arrangement*, is equally violated by affected stateliness, and by negligence and incorrectness. Of the former kind are the following instances.

* There is a sort of divines, who, if they do but happen of an unlucky hard word all the week, think themselves not careful of their flock, if they lay it not up till Sunday, and bestow it among them in their next sermon.

EACHARD'S *Contempt of the Clergy*, p. 46.

1. Placing the nominative case after the verb. Ex. "Wonderful are the effects of this passion in every view." "Not a little elegant is this manner of writing."

2. The objective case in the beginning of the sentence. "Varieties of national character we observe imprinted on the physiognomy of nations." And not unlike this is Mr. Gordon's very depraved construction in his translation of Tacitus; "At this time war there was none."

3. The objective case before the imperative mood. "How many nations have certainly fallen from that importance, which they had formerly borne among the societies of mankind, let the annals of the world declare."

I know nothing that more enfeebles a style, than beginning sentences with connective particles, such as *and*, *though*, *but*, *however*, *therefore*, &c. It seems to put the reader out of breath, and partakes in some measure of the ungracefulness and confusion of long sentences. It also destroys that compactness, which gives energy to style. These circumstances have made it common to introduce the connective as the second or third word of the sentence: and the same reasons are almost equally forcible against the use of relatives in the beginning of sentences.

It has also been generally esteemed ungraceful to conclude a sentence with a preposition or a trifling word. The auxiliary verbs are generally very bad conclusions. Ex. "If this affects him, what must the first motion of his zeal be?"

Lastly. There is often inelegance in placing the adverb before the auxiliary verb, as in the following instance: "the question stated in the preceding chapter

never has been fully considered." It would, I think, be better, "has never been fully, &c."

It would be impossible on this occasion to descend to a very minute detail. A good ear, and the perusal of good authors must unite to form a good taste in this particular. Pedantry, however, more frequently misleads us than any other cause. The style of female writers flows easier, and is commonly more harmonious, than that of professed scholars. One general rule may indeed be admitted: in narrative or plain didactic composition, in those which are intended merely to convey information, the natural order of the words is to be preferred; but, when passion or sublimity is the object, this order may be departed from, and a sentence must never conclude with a weak member or a trifling word. As perspicuity demands that enough shall be displayed in the first part of the sentence to make the aim of it manifest; so elegance and vivacity demand a degree of energy at the termination of it in order to leave an impression on the mind. Sometimes, however, in very animated expression, it has a good effect to place the emphatic word the first in order, as; *Blessed* is he "that cometh in the name of the Lord." "*Silver* and *gold* have I none, but such as I have give I thee." In this last sentence, the eager expectation, and the imploring look of the beggar naturally lead to a vivid conception of what was in his thoughts; and this conception is answered by the form, in which the declaration of the apostle is couched.

III. As a sermon is an oratorical composition, as it is intended for a popular assembly, and ought to interest the attention at least of the auditors, perspicuity and purity of style are scarcely sufficient commendations.

It should be calculated not only to instruct, but to persuade; not only to inform the judgment; but to conciliate the passions. Some degree of *Rhetorical embellishment*, therefore, becomes absolutely necessary; and it is one of the most difficult points to determine the nature, as well as the degree of this embellishment.

It is obvious that the ornaments of oratory are materially different from those of poetry. The aim of the former is to inform and persuade; of the latter to amuse. The one addresses the judgment and the passions; the other, the fancy. The one requires the utmost perspicuity; in the other, some degree of obscurity is frequently a beauty; a different choice and selection of the imagery and figures, which are employed, becomes therefore requisite in these different forms of composition.

The elegance of poetry frequently depends upon the happy application of imagery assumed from natural objects; the imagery proper for oratory is the imagery of sentiment. In the one, the woods, the plains, the fountains, and the hills, the expanded ocean, the serenity of the heavens, are the most striking objects; in the other, the human passions and pursuits, the fate of empires, the revolutions of fortune, and the uncertainty and variation in human affairs.

The *comparison*, which is frequently one of the most engaging figures in poetry, and affords the fullest scope for luxuriant description, is in general too cold and formal for oratory. The beauty of *metaphors* will frequently be lost in an attention to the subject, or in the warmth of the enunciation; and *allusions* and *metonymies* will rather obscure than enlighten the subject. *Personification* is still more allied to obscurity; and *allegory* is least

adapted of all to this species of composition. Instead of this play of the imagination, the orator must employ a force and energy of expression, a warmth of sentiment, and the stronger figures of *iteration*, *erotesis*, and *climax*.* In the use of these, however, he must be extremely cautious; for they are dangerous in the hands of the unskilful, and require the nicest taste in the application of them.

After all, it is a question, whether the modern compositions of the pulpit are not rather to be blamed for too much than for too little affectation of ornament.† In this case, perhaps, negative instruction may be the most useful; and to show what a style ought not to be, may answer a better purpose, than an imperfect endeavour to describe all the excellencies and graces, which a lively imagination and a fine taste may invent.

* The following is a fine instance of what I call the *iteration*, or repetition. "I have slain, I have slain, not a Sp.Mælius, who was suspected of aiming at the regal power; not a Tiberius Gracchus, who seditiously deposed his colleague from the magistracy; but I have slain the man, whose adulteries our noblest matrons discovered in the sacred recesses of the gods; the man, by whose punishment the senate so frequently determined to expiate the violation of the most solemn rites; the man, who by the hands of his slaves expelled a citizen, who was esteemed by the senate, by the people, by every nation on earth, the preserver of the city; the man, who gave and took away kingdoms, and distributed the world at his pleasure; the man, who defiled the forum with blood; the man, who fired the temple of the nymphs; in a word, the man, who governed himself by no principle, who acknowledged no law, who submitted to no limitation." Cic. *pro Milone*. The writings of St. Paul abound in these bold figures, particularly the *erotesis*, of which there are some uncommonly animated examples;—"What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." 1 Cor. xi. 22. The following is an example of the three figures united; "Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool,) I am more," &c. 2 Cor. xi. 22, 23.

† "The ornaments of language generally cost the writer much trouble, and produce small advantage to the hearer. Let the character of your sermons be truth and information, and a decent *particularity*." Paley's *Ordin. Serm.*

In the first place the popular harangues of the day have more of poetry* than of oratory in them, if false metaphor, inconsistent allegory, and in all respects "prose run mad," can have any claim to that appellation. Not satisfied with adopting whimsical allusions, they pursue them to an extreme of absurdity.

> "And ductile dulness new meanders makes,
> "And one poor word a thousand senses takes."†

It can be no gratification to a rational mind to give pain, otherwise I could furnish specimens of this kind abundantly ridiculous.‡ Figures, which have no ingenuity to recommend them, but are trite and common, ought carefully to be avoided.

* "Another thing, that brings great disrespect and mischief upon the clergy, is their packing their sermons so full of *similitudes;* which all the world know, carry with them but very small force of argument, unless there be an exact agreement with that which is compared; of which there is very seldom any sufficient care taken." EACHARD'S *Contempt*, &c. p. 58.

† "This is almost the perpetual vice of mean and low preachers; for, when they catch a figurative word, or a metaphor, as when GOD'S word is called a *fire*, or a *sword*, or the church a *house*, &c. they never fail to make a long detail of conformities between the figures and the subjects themselves, and frequently say ridiculous things." ROBINSON'S *Claude*, c. ii.

‡ It would be no very difficult matter to parallel the following specimens, which Dr. Eachard has quoted from the popular orators of his day.

"'Tis reported of a tree growing upon the bank of the Euphrates, that it brings forth an apple, to the eye very fair and tempting, but inwardly it is filled with nothing but useless and deceitful dust.—Dust we are, and to dust we must all go." *Contempt of the Clergy*, p. 62.

"I cannot omit that of the famous divine, who, advising the people in days of danger to run unto the Lord, tells them, that they cannot go to the Lord, much less run without feet; there are therefore two feet to run to the Lord, *faith* and *prayer*. 'Tis plain that faith is a foot; for, *by faith we stand.* 2 Cor. i. 24. The second is prayer, a spiritual leg to bear us thither; now, that prayer is a spiritual leg, appears from several places of Scripture, as from JONAH, c. ii. v. 7. *and my prayer came unto thy holy temple*," &c. Ib. p. 70.

Upon the text, MATT. iv. 25. *and there followed him great multitudes of people from* GALILEE. "I discover," (says the preacher,) "when JESUS prevails with us, we shall soon leave our GALILEES. I discover also (says he) a great miracle, viz. that the way after JESUS being *strait*, that such a multitude should follow him." *Ib.* p. 84.

Secondly. One of the most glaring vices of bad orators is the exclamation: "Oh!* my beloved Christians!" "Ah! my dear hearers!" "How delightful! how enlivening! how wonderful! how stupendous!" Such unmeaning phrases as these fill up all the blanks of their discourses, and stand in the place of sense and sentiment; to the critical eye, however, they never fail to discover "the nakedness of the land," and to exhibit the preacher labouring at a strain of pathos, which he is not able to effect. There is no figure, which is so nearly allied to the frigid as this. It was therefore never admitted by the Greeks, and very rarely by the Roman orators. It never appears in the discourses of Barrow, of Sherlock, and of Atterbury. Whether our popular preachers have improved upon these models or not, the reader will be at no loss to determine.

Thirdly. It is a poor expedient, and frequently borders on the ridiculous, to introduce the interlocutors in a sermon, and make speeches for the different characters. This artifice is generally adopted in order to display the theatrical gesture, and versatile talents of the preacher. It is impossible to see a good *religious face-maker* (as they are termed by the sagacious Dr. Eachard) perform one of these pulpit farces, without thinking of the strolling player in Scarron, who acted a whole play himself, only varying his position, attitude and voice, according as he represented the King, the Queen, or the Ambassador.

* There is not a word in the whole compass of the English language to which the popular preacher is under so many obligations as this small interjection. It intrudes itself upon all occasions, and if uttered with a proper vociferation, and a smart thump upon the breast, seldom fails to be followed by a reasonable number of groans and sighs from a certain part of the congregation. To every person, however, of taste and reflection, it only indicates a *wish to be pathetic without the power of being so.* This is not the oratory of Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke or Mr. Sheridan.

These minor orations are commonly very dull paraphrases of some animated passage of Holy Writ, and are sometimes no less inconsistent with decorum, than with the rules of chaste composition.

A fourth device of these flimsy orators, when in a strait for matter or sentiment, (which is often the case,) is to force in a huge scripture quotation; no matter how foreign to the general subject of the discourse; it has an air of piety, and therefore generally imposes on the well-meaning, but undiscerning, part of the audience.

Young orators are generally fond of the sublime to a degree of enthusiasm, and are too apt to affect it when least qualified. They are therefore very liable to deviate into bombast. The marking characters of the bombastic, or false sublime, are: 1st. Words without a distinct appropriate meaning, which the author himself probably could not define, if he were called upon to do it. 2dly. Descriptions, which cannot be reduced to canvass, which exhibit no distinct and uniform picture. 3dly. Similes and figures disproportioned to the subject. 4thly. An abundance of redundant, and unmeaning epithets.

An error apparently opposite to this, but frequently united with it, is the *feeble* style. The characters of this are: 1st. Loose and disjointed sentences, without point or conclusion. 2dly. Common-place imagery and expressions. 3dly. Colloquial expressions: as, "Well, but says some objector," &c.

One of the most common and the most dangerous errors, however, is the *mock pathos.* Many (I doubt not well-intentioned) persons conceive that they are to go to church for nothing but to weep; and the pitiful methods employed by some preachers to excite their tears cannot fail to have a direct contrary effect with

every rational person.* I am sensible that much will, in this case, depend upon the acting of a sermon, (as Dr. Warburton calls it.) I could mention a popular preacher, who regularly weeps at a certain period of his discourse, whether the subject be pathetic or not. The device generally succeeds with that part of the audience (and that is a pretty considerable portion) who pay no attention to the matter, and regard only the gesticulation of the preacher. This religious buffoonery, however, must necessarily disgust every judicious hearer; and the censure of one person of sense is, in my opinion, but weakly counterbalanced by the overflowing scale of vulgar popularity.

V.

OF MANNER, OR DELIVERY.

In treating of *manner*, I shall endeavour to contract this dissertation within still narrower limits than I have done on the preceding topics: and for this plain reason, that I conceive it to be the least necessary.

More attention has lately been lavished upon this art, than upon the more substantial objects of criticism; and, after all, the careful observation of good speakers will do more than all the abstract study in the world.

Speaking is a practical art, and we might as well pretend to teach a young person to dance, as to speak, by books only.

The principal points to be observed on this subject, are *modulation*, *emphasis*, and *action*.

* "A lady asked a certain great person coming out of church, whether it were not a very *moving* discourse?—*Yes*, said he, *I was extremely sorry; for the man is my friend.* *Swift's Let. to a Young Clergyman.*

First, with respect to *modulation.* It is evident, that the voice naturally assumes a different tone on different occasions. In common conversation, and in narrative, the voice flows in an even tenor, often approaching to monotony. In teaching or explaining, it is slower, more distinct, something more energetic, and rather less inclining to monotony. In extremes of passion, it is unequal, tremulous, and frequently interrupted. The great excellence of art is to reduce those observations, with which we are furnished by nature, to a regular system; and to produce on all occasions, what nature will do in its most perfect state.

The modulation suitable to the pulpit will be sufficiently apparent from these considerations. That violence of passion, which it is the excellence of a player to imitate, cannot possibly have any place there. The preacher's business is to argue, to convince, to persuade, not to storm or rage at his congregation. The raving and furious manner of some preachers may indeed, by mere dint of lungs, keep a congregation from dozing, but can neither inform nor conciliate any person of true taste or real piety.

From the nature of his office, from the nature of his composition, the preacher should always, in his enunciation, study "to beget a temperance that may give it a smoothness." Nothing can compensate for the loss of dignity; and the strong, energetic, yet temperate and even manner, is alone consistent with true dignity.

Above all things, the young preacher ought most carefully to avoid an unnatural or affected tone. At a period, when, from the frequency of theatrical exhibitions, the taste of the public, with respect to speaking, is much improved, such a defect will scarcely escape the

censure of even the ignorant and vulgar. In fact, I never knew of but one instance to the contrary. I remember, some years ago, in a considerable town in the North of England, a person offered himself as a candidate for a living, who performed the service in a tone of voice, which could only be compared to very bad chanting; it savoured indeed more of the synagogue than of the cathedral; and the composition of his sermon was as unintelligible as his manner was extraordinary. The judicious electors, because the exhibition was uncommon, concluded that it must be something remarkably fine. They afterwards accidentally discovered their mistake, but not till it was too late to rectify it.

Secondly. It is obvious, that every person, in discoursing earnestly upon any subject, usually marks, by a certain force or inflexion of voice, the significant and energetic words and expressions; and, both the number of those expressions, and the force with which they are enunciated, increase in proportion to the passion or vehemence of the speaker.

Emphasis is either absolute or relative. Absolute emphasis depends upon the subject, and consists in laying a stress upon such words, as we would wish to be particularly marked, and remembered; such as are directly connected with the sense of the whole; and on which it seems, in some degree, to depend.

Relative emphasis has a respect to something immediately going before or coming after, on which the sense of the sentence depends. The whole point and force of the following sentence would be lost by a wrong emphasis: "Philosophy alone can boast, (and perhaps it is only the *boast* of philosophy,) that her gentle hand is able to eradicate from the human mind the latent and

deadly principle of fanaticism." "Another servant, being *his* kinsman, whose ear Peter cut off;" here, unless a proper emphasis be laid, there will be some room for supposing, that the servant was the kinsman of Peter, and that he was actually the person, whose ear had been cut off. In the following lines, much obscurity may be produced by an improper emphasis:

> "If *clouds* or *earthquakes* break not heaven's design,
> "Why then a *Borgia* or a *Cataline?*"

Unless the reader remembers, that the word *should* is understood, and reads the verses accordingly, the auditors might suppose the latter line to relate merely to the existence of a Borgia, &c.*

Sometimes half a sentence is emphatic with respect to the rest. Ex. "The *odia in longum jacens*, I thought had belonged only to the *worst character* of *antiquity*." Unless each of these latter words be pronounced with equal force, the sense of the author will be destroyed, as will be evident by placing the emphasis on either *worst* or *antiquity*, and comparing it with the context.

The great use of emphasis is to render a discourse plain and intelligible to the auditors; and, consequently, that emphasis is most judicious, which is most discriminative. For this reason, I disagree with both Mr. Garrick and Dr. Johnson in their mode of accenting the latter commandments of the Decalogue. "Thou shalt not steal," for instance. Here Mr. Garrick placed the emphasis upon the auxiliary verb, *shalt*, which was evident-

* If the great convulsions of nature, says Mr. Pope in this couplet, do not interrupt the order of Almighty providence, why should it be interrupted by the convulsions of the moral world; why should a Borgia or a Cataline not make a part of the plan and order of divine government, as much as those natural phenomena, the causes of which are now well understood, and which are known to be perfectly consistent with the general laws of nature?

ly wrong, as Dr. Johnson objected that the commandment was negative; and he accordingly placed the emphasis upon *not*. It is plain, however, that this emphasis neither serves to explain the nature of the commandment, nor to point the attention to its principal object. The congregation are sufficiently aware, that the Decalogue consists of authoritative precepts, and therefore there cannot be the least necessity for dwelling upon the verb *shalt;* most of the commandments are of a negative kind, and of course there can be no occasion to make *not* the principal word in the sentence; and that, too, with a manifest risk that the principal object of the commandment shall not be heard, or at least not attended to. Besides this, we are so accustomed to what I call relative emphasis, that, by accenting either of those words, the ear is naturally led to expect something correspondent to them: thus, by saying "Thou shalt *not* steal," the auditor is induced to expect the antithetical *but*, with some correspondent appendage. The truth is, both these words should be pronounced with a full tone of voice; but, the real force of the emphasis ought to rest upon the word *steal*, or whatever word particularly distinguishes the commandment from the rest.

Thirdly. On the subject of ACTION, I find much to reprehend in most preachers, and I might add in most players also. The most general vice is *unmeaning* action. Mr. Garrick used less action than any performer I ever saw; but his action had always some meaning, it always spoke; and, by making use of less than other actors, it perhaps had the greater force.

In this case, some respect must be had to the character of the nation, which is gravity; some respect must be had to that which the speaker assumes; and a

preacher of the gospel is certainly the gravest of characters. Much action is expressive of levity, and therefore altogether inconsistent with both these circumstances. Besides, action is in general expressive of great passion, and therefore cannot be required, or even expected in a public speaker, whose business is only to teach or to explain.

Some kinds of action are in themselves ungraceful. I have seen one preacher, whose hands were constantly employed, as if he were engaged in the occupation of a grave digger; and another, who seemed perpetually hammering nails into the pulpit. I know no attitude so completely disgusting as what I call the *spread-eagle* attitude, with both wings elevated as if in the action of flying; and I have heard of a certain preacher, who was ludicrously compared to a *tea-pot*, from the affected position in which he commonly addressed the multitude.

The meanest species of buffoonery is that of *acting your words;* and yet I have known this practice confer some degree of popularity. To understand perfectly the absurdity of it, it is only necessary to observe it in excess. What should we think of the person, for instance, who, in reading the following lines, should think proper to represent the actions which they describe?

> "Did some more sober critic *come abroad,*
> "If wrong, I *smil'd;* if right, I *kiss'd* the rod."

Or if, in reading the introductory sentence of the Common Prayer, "*Rend* your *hearts*, and not your *garments*," a clergyman were to mimic these actions, should we not think he meant to ridicule either the liturgy or the congregation? Depend upon it, it is not less essentially absurd, and only differs in degree, when the preacher, ev-

ery time the heart is mentioned, claps his hand to his breast; or, if he reads "the *heavens* declare the glory of God," thinks it necessary to raise his arm, as if pointing to a sign post.

Every thing like affectation ought to be cautiously avoided.* If a preacher can unite good sense and piety with a style tolerably smooth and harmonious; if his voice be not harsh or disgusting; and if his delivery be easy and unembarrassed, he will find no need of flourishes to render himself agreeable. Few can excel in the higher requisites of oratory; few can be fine speakers; but all may be correct and agreeable speakers, if they will not be too ambitious of being fine speakers. If an orator once lose sight of nature, no exertion of art can compensate for the deviation.

It has been frequently debated, whether a sermon may be delivered to most advantage, perfectly extempore, from memory, or from written notes. I have tried all these methods; and, from repeated experience, I do not hesitate to give the preference to the last. In speaking extempore, the mind is too intent upon the matter and the language, to attend to the manner; and, though the emphasis will in general be right, this is more than counterbalanced by the defects in modulation, and by the want of that harmonious and full conclusion of the periods, which may be effected, when we are previously acquainted with the extent of the sentence. In delivering a composition by rote, the memory is so much upon the stretch, that a degree of embarrassment necessarily ensues. The success of the actors, I am aware, will

* "Off come the gloves: and, the hands being well chafed, he shrinks up his shoulders, and stretches forth himself as if he were going to cleave a bullock's head, or rive the body of an oak." *Eachard's Contempt of the Clergy.*

form a strong objection to this observation; but, let it be remembered, the speeches, which they have to commit to memory, are so short, that they will not bear any comparison with the delivery of a long and complex piece of composition; not to mention the aids, which they receive from what is called the *cue*, or the responses of the other characters, and from the constant attention of the prompter.

It was my intention to have concluded with a critical examination of the most approved specimens extant in this species of composition; but I find I have already exceeded my limits, and, I fear, have exhausted the patience of the reader. Indeed I have been compelled, for the sake of brevity, to omit several remarks, which might have been useful to some, and acceptable to many persons; and have confined myself to what I esteemed absolutely necessary.

A LETTER

ON

THE ART OF PREACHING.

TRANSLATED FROM M. REYBAZ.

51

LETTER

ON

THE ART OF PREACHING.

Being about to take upon yourself the office of a Preacher of the Gospel, you solicit my advice, which I consider as a proof, that you feel the difficulties attendant upon what you are going to perform. How many young Preachers do we see, who have received no previous instructions—and who have not, it may be presumed, considered instruction necessary; presenting themselves, with confidence before a public assembly! The modesty, which characterises you, is an omen of your success, and you deserve a more able guide, than my knowledge and abilities allow me to be.

As you have resolved to adopt the ecclesiastical vocation, you have, doubtless, made a previous investigation of your resources, and compared your several faculties, not with those of persons, whose lives have been devoted to their profession, but with those which the discharge of the duty requires. You have also, I trust, compared the importance of the work, with the powers of your mind; remembering, that you should not undertake any engagement without having first ascertained your capability to fulfil it.

Few vocations require such an union of talents, as that of a minister of the gospel. It calls forth every endowment of the mind, all the faculties of the soul, and the most attractive gracefulness of the body. Of these several powers, some are more essential than others; some are so indispensably necessary, that a young man is unpardonable, if he engage in this work of the Lord, without them.

If our studies have been well directed; if we have profited by application; and if we are ambitious to distinguish ourselves in our profession; it is quite sufficient to have been born with common abilities, to possess the qualities of mind requisite for a preacher. A certain flow of ideas, and a perfect knowledge of the holy scriptures, is the effect of mature study. One view of a subject will discover what it principally contains, to form the basis of a discourse; and a knowledge of logic will teach you to make an happy decision, and just arrangement. There is not a man, devoted, in any degree, to his calling, who cannot, with care and labour, compose a sermon, which, if not eloquent, will, at least, be useful and edifying.

A knowledge of the human heart is just as necessary to a preacher, as that of the holy scriptures. The human heart is a difficult book, and if we do not read, carefully, every page, we ought, at least, to study the principal chapters: it will prevent us from erring, by describing an imaginary, in the place of a real, being, and will supply us with that information, which will enable us to know, what is of all things the most difficult; ourselves.

For want of society, which is, in this respect, the best school for a preacher, but which we cannot always

frequent, he should study the most celebrated moralists: let him, above all, read that celebrated orator, Massillon, from whom nothing that concerned the human heart was concealed. I am not ashamed to recommend to his perusal, works of imagination, which are distinguished by purity of morals, and detail of character, designed at once, to interest the affections, and improve the understanding.

There is not a subject within the sphere of an orator, which does not demand a certain diversity of thoughts, the solution of which requires care and exercises judgment, together with an order and method, in the arrangement of them. There is, moreover, a certain quality, valuable in itself, and indispensable to an orator, which animates and inspires all his discourses, and which displays its intuitive power more fully in some persons than others; this quality is inherent in the soul; it cannot be acquired by diligence: I describe it in one word—sensibility.

If an orator has not sensibility, he cannot attain the highest end of his labours, which is to affect the heart, while he informs the understanding. There is no emotion produced by eloquence, which does not spring from sensibility. It was that which inspired Fenelon, Bossuet, Flechier, Massillon, Saurin, the Abbe Poul, in some of their finest passages. He, who is so phlegmatic, as always to leave his hearers unaffected, is in want of an oratorical requisite, for which no learning can atone, and which no diligence will supply.

What then shall we say of those preachers, who, far from transforming into sentiment, the abstract principles of morality, even speak in the language of metaphysics? Would an orator, endowed with sensibility,

pursue so inefficacious a mean of edification? Be a philosopher; but in discourses from the pulpit, assume neither the tone, nor the language, of philosophy.

Sensibility, it is to be observed, has its degrees, and may increase by exercise. Thus, I would not prevent a man from becoming a preacher, because he discovers no more than a spark of it, or because his attempt to introduce it into his discourses is feeble, and in consequence unsuccessful. It is sufficient to be not absolutely devoid of sensibility, provided we can by the force of application, excite in ourselves a certain degree of energy. For that purpose, shun those exhibitions, which harden the heart; frequent no spectacles, which do not give soft impressions; let your time be employed in that course of reading, which inspires virtue, whose natural delineations affect the breast with gentle emotions, without rending it. When this power has taken possession of the heart, it will show itself in your public discourses. You have then only to yield to its impressions; and when you come to deliver your subject from the pulpit, your enunciation, while it evinces your meaning, will communicate your portion of sensibility to your auditory.

In order that your sermons may produce the effect intended by them, you must endeavour to rehearse them from memory. Have you then a memory adapted to that purpose? Can you, without occupying too much time, and giving too great diligence, learn your sermon, so as to deliver it with ease, and repeat it without embarrassment? Memory is, like sensibility, strengthened by exercise. I know it. You cannot have finished your academical studies, without having frequently exerted your memory, and tried its power. You can, therefore,

form, in this respect, a tolerably competent judgment of yourself.

If your memory be treacherous, and you cannot depend upon it; how will you be distinguished in a profession, of which it a principal requisite? If you attempt to repeat your sermon, and do not perfectly recollect it, you occasion great distress to your audience: and how can you give that freedom to your utterance, and that action to your elocution, which are indispensable towards producing a high effect? If you hesitate, you deprive your delivery of the advantages it has over reading. In that case, rather read, than attempt to repeat; or, I would say, rather give up the pulpit forever, where there is a barrier to your success, and which, if you have any attachment to your profession, or respect for yourself, will produce in you only uneasiness and mortification.*

But in vain do you possess an unruffled memory, if your audience lose any parts of your discourse, through the weakness of the organ which is to transmit it to them. A clear, loud voice, which can, without straining or effort, be distinctly heard by a numerous assembly, is a happy and an invaluable quality in an orator. A powerful voice commands the attention, and prevents the distraction of mind, which is, alas! too prevalent in the best disposed congregations. It is not only requisite.

* To address the congregation, is the mode of speaking both the most pleasing and useful to the auditory, and at the same time, the most natural and satisfactory to the orator; by which, I mean, the directing his voice both to the right and left; to be able to do this oratorically, he must know his sermon thoroughly, and by glancing his eye upon it, as he turns his head from one side to the other—for there should be scarce any motion of his person—he will have the appearance of repeating, while he possesses the advantage of frequent recourse to his manuscript.

that every individual should, without being eagerly intent, and throughout every part of the church, hear the preacher; but it is also requisite, that it should be impossible not to hear him; and that the sound should be clear and full, even when he is giving the utmost melody to his periods.

It is not always that a voice is of sufficient extent, and it is not always that a public speaker is an orator. It has happened to me, more than once, to have been present at a sermon, and not to have heard it: many others were in the same predicament. What signified it, therefore, whether the sermon was good or bad? The preacher may, under shelter of one defect, conceal many.

Monotony is one of the natural and unhappy attendants upon a feeble enunciation. The orator, possessing only a small compass of voice, cannot vary his cadence. It is still worse if he make any efforts to be heard: he then does not speak; he only squeaks; his voice becomes unnatural; he has only one tone, and it offends the ear.

Exercise it is said, strengthens the voice, gives it power and extent; this is true, when the weakness is in the organ only; when the voice wants merely to be exerted, and to have a more ample range. But if this defect, as it often happens, arises from the lungs, it cannot be overcome, except at the risque of one's health, or, it may be of life.

The chief means of remedying the weakness of the organs, is to articulate very distinctly. Clearness of pronunciation will contribute to make you heard more than the greatest exertion of voice; the syllables should, in succession, strike the ear, and this should be the ob-

ject of unceasing attention. You will form a very erroneous judgment, if you take the tone of familiar conversation as a rule for a public discourse. In the one case, you speak, if I may be allowed the expression, to the ear of your hearer, and nothing escapes him; in the other, the word has to find his ear—to reach him at the extremities of a large building; feeble sounds never arrive there; and if even the pronunciation is not unusually distinct nothing is heard in the remote parts of the church, but sounds, which are altogether inarticulate.

Clearness of pronunciation is, to the ear, what clearness of perception is to the mind; we must express ourselves without embarrassment, to be heard; and we may apply to the delivery of a discourse, what Quintilian said of the discourse itself; *prima virtus orationis perspicuitas.*

I suppose then, you possess those elemental qualities I have briefly mentioned, and which constitute the very first principles of elocution; you are now about to commence your vocation.

Do you know, my friend, how to read? This question may astonish you; but you may have read a great deal, without knowing how to read. There are some preachers, who, arrived at old age, have read all their life, and who are, themselves, the evidences, that good reading is very rare.

To read, is not to collect letters and syllables; it is not to pronounce words and sentences: it is to express the sense of these sentences; it is to represent the thoughts of a discourse, in their appropriate colours. It is to blend the different passages, in such a manner as not to injure each other; but, on the contrary, to give to each mutual strength and assistance. It is to distinguish, by the accent, what is only argumentative, from

what is pathetic and oratorical; it is to discern any important end in a sentence, in order to detach it from the rest, and express it without affectation, and without the appearance of design; it is to convey the idea, rather than the expressions, the sentiments rather than the words; it is to follow the impulse of the discourse, in such a manner, that the delivery may be quick or slow, mild or impetuous, according to the emotions it should excite.

To read, is to express, by variations of voice, the comforts arising from the consciousness of innocence, and the horrors, from the instigations of vice; the warmth of zeal, and coolness of indifference; indignation, fear, pity, and benevolence; the blessings and chastisements of God; the pride and misery of man; the supplications to the Supreme Being, and the pathetic exhortations to sinful men. In short, to read, is to distinguish our several thoughts and sentiments, by inflections of voice, which should, at once, describe their meaning, and impress their power.

When you have got the better, if it be possible, of all provincial accent, and your pronunciation is pure and correct; when you have accustomed yourself to read aloud, with feeling, and varying your tones, in such a way, that what you read, may be well understood; then, progressively, raise your voice, three or four notes higher than the common tone; and do not appear in the pulpit, until you have many times repeated this useful experiment.

Timidity, when its influence is greatly predominant, disconcerts; it prevents the exertion of talent. On the other hand, presumptuous confidences prejudices an auditory against the speaker, who should, by all means, prepossess their good-will. Keep then, a wise mean. Ap-

pear, at least, to entertain a very modest opinion of yourself, which has always the effect of disarming criticism, and conciliating the esteem of a congregation. I have seen preachers, who, to practise a little deceit on themselves, and thereby shun the distractions which their timidity might occasion, fix their eyes on a pillar of the church,* and address their discourse, exclusively, to it. This mode of speaking is not judicious. The preacher loses by it all the warmth of his zeal, and destroys the effect of the expression of countenance. It is the assembly he ought to look in the face. To them he proposes his questions; to them he addresses the reasoning of his propositions, the gentleness of his reproofs, and the earnestness of his exhortations. It is the assembly which animates the orator, which inspires him with suitable tones, and with a pleasing cadence. How, without looking continually around him, can he perceive, whether the attention of his congregation is supported, or relaxed? And how can he again attract it, when it has been suffered to escape, but by redoubled zeal, and a more impassioned address?

Scarcely has the preacher opened his mouth than a religious fascination inspires the audience. He is no longer an ordinary person. He is an heavenly ambassador, invested with divine authority; his language, his accents, assume a more grave and solemn character than those of a mere man. Happy, if nothing throughout the discourse happen to dissipate the illusion, and divert the attention of the auditory!

* When a Clergyman preaches in a Church, with which he is not at all acquainted, to direct his voice, at the beginning of his sermon, to a distant object, *is not injudicious.* Dr. Hinchliffe, the late bishop of Peterborough, always did so, and he was, during his life, considered one of the best preachers in the church of England.

You comprehend that it is not necessary, in the exordium of your discourse, to give yourself up to declamation. If you except these cases when the preacher seems overcome with a thought which prepossesses him; when he communicates to his auditory, a powerful impulse, the effect of his preceding meditations; except, I say, these cases, which are rare, you should enter on your discourse with composure, elegance, and simplicity.

We see preachers who seem to be exhausted with their exordium. They elevate their voice to the highest pitch at the very commencement. Did that exordium constitute the whole of the sermon, they would not be reprehensible; but it is only an introduction; and when they come to the main point of the subject, they are not able to support the power with which they set out; and their discourse appears like a monster, with a large head and a meagre body.

Let the mildness of your exordium prescribe to you the proper tone in which it requires to be delivered. Your guarded gesture should correspond with it, and all action should be restrained. An exordium, indeed, is not always necessary; sometimes a preacher enters on the subject without a previous introduction.

I do not hesitate to prefer, in a sermon, divisions formally announced, to those which are only intimated by transitions, in the arrangement of the discourse. This last method, is doubtless, the most oratorical, but, certainly, not the best adapted to assist the memory of those, who pay little attention.

In printed discourses I prefer divisions, rather implied than expressed, where the reader can review the plan, which the author has traced. Whereas, in a discourse, which is to be delivered, clear divisions are ne-

cessary, for the sake of remembering what has been spoken. It is the handle of a vase, in the taking hold of which, every thing it contains, goes with it; but if it has no handle, and is out of our reach, its contents are lost to us.

After having fixed the attention of your audience on the plan you propose to follow, you then fully open your discourse, and pass, by means of transition, from one point to another.

It is by incorporating argument and eloquence, doctrine and exhortation, precept and address, that you are enabled to vary your delivery; if, at least, your mode of speaking corresponds to your plan of composition.

Most of the French Catholic preachers are full of fire; but as they begin they conclude; the whole discourse is a constant peroration.* Let me not be mistaken; a tone always exalted; a severe system of morality; singularity of sentiment, and extravagance of hyperbole, are only the characters of vehemence, and by no means denote the excellence of the preacher. I would rather undo, than overdo, the thing: what does not attain the proposed end, is but feeble; what exceeds it, is ridiculous.

There are some cases in the delivery, where the manner of speaking depends entirely on the *preceding* parts. After, for instance, some very vehement passages, the more tranquil should gradually abate of their force; the waves of an agitated sea do not calm immediately, although the wind ceases.

* Notwithstanding this censure passed upon the Catholic preachers, sure I am, that their Sermons, if judiciously abridged, and adapted to an English Protestant congregation, would produce the highest effects. The preacher, who would thus prepare them, would, I doubt not, have an auditory, both increasing in numbers, and improving in morals.

Would you be indeed distinguished; be simply elegant, and uniformly proper; be calm, in general, in order to be vehement, when the juncture shall arrive. Reserve your oratorical powers for the conclusion of your discourse, when you apply more particularly to your audience, the general truths, which you have been propounding.

In avoiding monotony, that is, a tone uniformly the same, be careful not to fall into what is called a whine or cant, which is still more insupportable than monotony itself. This whine or cant, consists in the use of two or three tones, which return in the same order, and terminate by the same fall; the preacher acquires these bad habits, when the weakness of his voice forbids the variety of necessary tones, or when habit takes the place of sense, and of earnestness. This fault is tolerable to an audience, and not unfrequently, renders preaching useless.

I much wish that young preachers would not neglect any means of forming their voice, and improving their ear. Some knowledge of vocal music* would be very useful to them; the practice of it would acquaint them with many secrets.

What I remark on the voice, may, in many respects, be said of action. It ought to be just, expressive, simple, and at the same time varied. But what gives expression to action? What are its defects and qualities? Are there any rules to follow concerning it? We have no fixed model to consult, as we have on written elo-

* I once heard the following remark made by a clergyman, who is an ornament to his profession, and it is consonant to general observation;—"The recommendation of vocal music seems equivocal, and is not founded on experience, since I have known the finest singers and players, unable to read well, and on the contrary, excellent readers make very bad singers."

quence. We must collect transient observations, and determine between disputed principles.

Action is indispensably necessary in the art of oratory; it is dictated by feeling, emotion, and zeal, and is not always regulated without difficulty. Observe the drawings of great painters, in their representation of the action, which they give to persons. Junius, in his treatise on the painting of the ancients, says, that the hands assist the words, that they can demand, promise, call, detest, interrogate, refuse, and declare the different affections of the soul. Action is the means by which the dumb make themselves understood: by it they express all their sentiments, and convey all their thoughts.

Gesture is very common and familiar to persons, who are quick and lively; it is less so with sedate and quiet people. The Italians use much gesticulation when they speak; it is not the case with the inhabitants of the more nothern countries. In France, where exterior appearance is so much studied, good taste suppresses all gesture; the women, especially, who pass for the most accomplished, absolutely renounce it, finding, no doubt, that it is much easier to abstain from, than to regulate it. Their conversation would, in consequence, appear uninteresting, did they not supply the place of action, by a cadence in their speech, and an ease in their deportment.

An orator without action, would deprive himself of one great means of persuasion and effect; his eloquence would be unaffecting, and would be destitute both of its charms and power.

Gesture should not approach to pantomime. Too much repeated, and too vehement, it fatigues the eyes, and loses its excellence.

If any profound sentiment affect you; if you speak of any thing, which inspires you with reverence, as God, his providence, and adorable perfections, gesture is then altogether unseasonable; more especially, if you introduce the divinity as speaking unto man, let a perfect composure have place throughout your whole frame; as gesture and action could give neither power to your language, nor dignity to your sentiments.

If you have any principle to establish, any feeling to describe, call in action to your assistance; but let it be grave and chaste, and not intemperate and ludicrous. The violent motion of the hands is not less offensive, than the babbling of the tongue; there is a dignity peculiar to the pulpit, which is violated by unseemly action.

Action should be free and unrestrained. It should proceed from the shoulders; that which arises from the elbow, and, more especially, from the hands, is not sufficiently dignified. When your period is finished, let your action cease: and do not use a variety of gestures to express one idea.

The two arms, only, can contribute to action. Be careful, when you use them together, that their motions correspond. Their want of concord would be as offensive to the eye, as harshness of sound is grating to the ear.

In general, when one hand only is used, the right should be preferred. Not that it is has any advantage over the left; but whether it is that a public speaker is more accustomed to use it, or that the eye is more habituated to the use of it, the action of the left hand seldom appears graceful.

Some writers on oratory have endeavoured to prescribe bounds to the height the action of the hand should

be carried; do not, it has been said by some, let it pass the head; by others, let your passions direct you; and if they impel you to raise your hands above your head, they will produce no bad effect. It is, then, nature which dictates it. Nature, alone, should limit you in your animating exclamations; and in an ardent invocation, and in a transport of admiration, nature, alone, should be your guide.

But let your action be always just; there are some men, in whom it is, unfortunately, always false. Having neither judgment nor ear, their action is never what it should be.

Should this, unhappily, be your case, discard action altogether. It is much better to deprive yourself of its advantages, were it even unexceptionable, than to make it either embarrass your periods, or give them a contrary meaning. Just action, and a correct judgment, usually go together. Nature seldom allows the perfection of one, with the absence of the other.

The action, which would attempt to express words, of which a sentence is composed, would evidently fail in its effect. It would be as offensive as trifling: it is the general meaning, and predominant idea which should be conveyed. But how is this to be accomplished? It cannot be taught. Judgment, taste, and above all, good models will illustrate it.

To vary the gesture is a talent, and this talent leads to correctness; for, if the turn of a discourse varies considerably, the action in order to express it, ought to vary likewise. When a preacher has only one gesture, it will, necessarily, be incorrect or insignificant; notwithstanding which, a dull uniformity of action is the common defect of preachers. The whole eloquence of the

person, at least, with many preachers, consists in spreading their hands, for the purpose of uniting them with a loud noise,* and in continually repeating this periodical motion. Thus they make the auditor the victim of their unskilfulness; they torment his eyes, and wound his ears, without mercy, by means injudiciously designed to attach and please them.

The arms and hands are not the only instruments of action; the whole person ought to concur in it. The positions of the body should vary, sometimes by turning to the right,† and sometimes to the left. I have often regretted, that our pulpits‡ were not, as in many places in Italy, formed like a tribune, where the preacher could move at liberty.

Expressions of countenance, the fire and energy of the looks, add greatly to the manner of delivery; the turn of the eyes is a species of action, which gives life to eloquence.

These various talents are only means to add efficacy to the action of the preacher. To action, all the observations I have made, exclusively relate. It is the vehicle of thoughts and feelings, with which a minister can more sensibly affect his audience. To say, that a preacher has just and appropriate action, is to say, he possesses in an eminent degree, all the exterior qualities

* This censure equally applies to the Methodists, Calvinists, Independents, &c.

† In small churches no inconvenience may arise from following these directions; but in a large building, where the pulpit is central, while the person of the preacher is turned towards one half of the congregation, the other is generally prevented from hearing.

‡ Many of the English pulpits are, it is true, sufficiently awkward; but such as M. Reybaz proposes, would only tend to make the speaker theatrical, and would totally destroy the solemnity of the preaching.

of an orator, in alliance with the liveliness, which gives to these qualities their power, and determines their efects.

Demosthenes being asked, in what eloquence consisted, centered the whole in action; and repeated the same word three times, as if he had said, it included every thing, and that eloquence could not exist, independent of it. I contrast action with the coolness of those orators, little deserving of the name, with those ministers of habit, who do not, themselves, feel the truths of which they are commissioned to make others sensible; or, who are absolutely indifferent to the religion which they preach, and the effect it is intended to produce.

I do not hesitate to pronounce, however influenced we may be by custom, that the effect of eloquence is astonishing. Compose an indifferent discourse, and repeat it perfectly, you will satisfy your audience much more, than with an excellent sermon, delivered with disgusting monotony, or lifeless utterance.

How many times have we been delighted with the delivery of a composition, the perusal of which we could not endure? And, on the contrary, how often has a work, which pleased us in the reading appeared otherwise when spoken? what inference shall we draw from this? That elocution is an important art; and that a preacher cannot apply himself to it too attentively: not for the purpose of giving effect to a bad discourse, but to exhibit with all its advantages, a sermon, convincing by its argument, and efficacious by its persuasion.

You will find, in the history of eloquence, that the orator owes his success, principally, to declamation. The harangues of Pericles, produced, in his mouth, the

highest effect. He published them; but Quintilian esteemed them unworthy of the reputation they had acquired. The minister Du Bosc was deputed by the Protestant clergy to address to Louis XIV. their remonstrances. I have just heard, said that prince, the finest preacher in my kingdom. The extreme feebleness of the sermons published by Du Bosc, strongly prepossess us in favour of his exterior eloquence.

There are three* sorts of declamation; that of the pulpit, of the theatre, and of the bar. But as each has a species of eloquence peculiar to itself, so it hath of declamation likewise. Whatever it is that a person repeats, he should always consider who it is that speaks; who are the people addressed; what ought to be the subject matter of the discourse; and under what circumstances the auditory is convened. These considerations regulate the art of speaking.

The preacher commonly speaks to instruct the assembly; he is transported with the emotions he endeavours to excite. If he feel sensibly, if he be sometimes moved to tears, he has always in view the welfare of his audience; the declamation of the preacher will be influenced by that single motive; the whole tenor of his action will be to persuade the affections, and to impress the heart.

One successful method of an orator's conciliating the esteem of his audience is, by the observance of oratorical decorum. It is not becoming in a young preacher to censure old age with severity; it is not becoming in him to be austere in his system of morality, to declaim against permitted pleasures, and not to allow any thing

* M. Reybaz knew nothing of the eloquence of the British parliament, which surpasses often the eloquence of the pulpit, even in France.

to human weakness. It is not becoming in him whose situation in life is obscure, to inveigh loudly against riches; not to censure, indiscriminately, the application of them, as he will only subject himself to the suspicion of envy. He must take care, at the Festivals of the church, and on days set apart, by authority, for solemn worship, not to preach on moral subjects, which have been often discussed, since they will not be esteemed judicious and appropriate.

Be attentive to what your age, your rank in the church, your condition in society, the times, places and persons prescribe to you to say, and you will preserve decorum. Religion does not discard, but enjoins it; religion recommends prudence, which suggests the greatest caution in not wounding, unnecessarily, the feelings of others. The Essay of the Abbe Mallet, on oratorical decorum, is worthy of your serious perusal.

There are many works on preaching; the æra of Louis XIV. produced many, and the seventeenth century has produced more. Much as may, confessedly, be gained by the study of Treatises on Oratory, if your object be to arrive at celebrity, as a preacher, still, a great genius is far superior to their instructions. They will teach you to shun the defects of the art; but will they inspire you with its beauties? There exists a natural relation between the mode of speaking, and of what we speak. I have never heard an eloquent composition delivered, by the Author, in an ungraceful and uninteresting manner.

The substance of all the rules I have laid down is this, that a preacher ought not merely to *seem*, but actually TO BE impressed with the truths he delivers. Let a truly religious disposition prevail throughout your

discourse. Let not your preaching be such as will be flattering to yourself, but adapted to the improvement and edification of your audience. The perfection of eloquence, in a Christian orator, consists in forgetting himself; the importance of what he is delivering, and the effect it ought to produce, should suppress all consciousness of his own talents.

Above all, let your morals be correspondent to your doctrine. Let your appearance excite the ideas of wisdom, integrity and piety. By your virtues, attract the respect and confidence of mankind, that every heart may be disposed to profit by your instructions. Justify, by your example, the definition, which Quintilian gave of an orator, when he said, the upright is the eloquent man.

You asked me for instruction in the art of preaching, persuaded they would be useful to you. If I have been fortunate enough to answer your expectations, answer mine in return. May you make an happy application of the principles I have laid down. May your ministry flourish, and be productive of the most blessed effects! May you, by the successful cultivation of the Lord's vineyard, receive as the reward of your labours, not the admiration and the praises, but the blessings, of those you have instructed, consoled, and nourished, with the words of life!

A LIST OF BOOKS

TO AID

YOUNG PREACHERS IN THE SELECTION OF A LIBRARY.

To any one, who is acquainted with books, it will be evident that the following list is not designed to be taken as a guide, in the selection of an extensive library. It would require a volume to mention even the titles of those books, which might be recommended as desirable for a preacher to possess. All that is intended here, is to enumerate so many of the most valuable works as to assist theological students, of limited means, in their early selections. They whose resources will admit of expensive purchases, will of course resort to such catalogues and bibliothecas, as contain ample information to direct their choice.

The price of books depends so much on the quality of the edition, and the circumstances of the purchase, that it is omitted in the following list.

Biblia Heb. Michaelis, vel Simonis, vel Vander Hooght.
Lexicon Heb. Simonis edit. ab Eichhornio, vel Gesenii, edit. secund.
Schleusneri Lexicon Nov. Test. 2 vols. 8vo.
Poli Synopsis Criticorum, 5 vols. folio.
Campbell on the Gospels, 4 vols. 8vo.
Lowth's Lectures on Heb. Poetry, 8vo.
Translation of Isaiah, 8vo.
Cruden's Concordance 4to.
Concordantiæ Græca, Schmidii, folio.
Scott's Commentary, 5 vols. 4to. or 6 vols. 8vo.
Doddridge's Expositor, 6 vols. 8vo.
Guyse's Paraphrase, 3 vols. 4to. or 6 vols. 8vo.
Macknight on the Epistles, 6 vols. 8vo.

Owen on the Hebrews, 4 vols. 8vo.
Titmannus in Evang. Johann. 8vo.
Patrick, Lowth, and Whitby united, on the Old and New Testaments, 6 vols. folio.
Rosenmuller in Nov. Test. 5 vols. 8vo. recommended so far as philology is concerned.
Rosenmuller in Vet. Test. 18 vols. 8vo. recommended only so far as philology is concerned.
Wolfii Curæ Criticæ in Nov. Test. 5 vols. 4to.
Mori Hermeneutica Nov. Test. 2 vols. 8vo.
Marsh's Michaelis Introd. to New Testament, 8vo.
Ernesti Institutio Interpretis, 12mo.
Newcome's Greek Harmony of the Evangelists, 8vo.
Kuinoel Com. in Evangel. 3 vols. 8vo.
Paley's Evidences of Christianity, 12mo.
Horæ Paulinæ, 8vo.
Campbell on Miracles, 12mo.
Stillingfleet's Origines Sacræ, folio.
Leland's Advantage and Necessity of revelation, 2 vols. 8vo.
View of Deistical writers 2 vols. 8vo.
Leslie' Short Method, 8vo.
Chalmer's Evidences, 8vo.
Berkeley's Minute Philosopher, 8vo.
Butler's Analogy, 8vo.
Douglas's Criterion, 8vo.
Gisborne's Testimony of Nat. Theol. to Christianity, 12mo.
Paley's Nat. Theology, 12mo.
Turrettini Institutio Theologiæ Elenchticæ, 3 vols. 4to.
Van Mastricht's Theology
Calvin's Institutes, translated by Allen, 3 vols. 8vo.
Edwards's Works, 8 vols. 8vo.
Edwards Jun. on Liberty and Necessity, 8vo.
Against Chauncey, 8vo.
Hopkins' System, 2 vols. 8vo.
Dwight's Theology, 5 vols. 8vo.
Ridgley's Body of Divinity, with notes by Wilson, 4 vols. 8vo.
Magee on Atonement, 8vo.

Bellamy's Works, 3 vols. 8vo.
Fuller's Works.
Witsius on the Covenants, 3 vols. 8vo.
Wardlaw on the Socinian Controversy.
Watts' Works, 7 vols. 8vo.
Witherspoon's Works, 4 vols. 8vo.
Johnson's Dictionary, 4 vols. 8vo. or with corrections and large additions by Todd, 5 vols. 4to.
Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary, 8vo.
Elements of Elocution, 8vo.
Key to Proper Names, 8vo.
Crabb's English Synonymes, 8vo.
Campbell's Philos. of Rhetoric, 2 vols. 8vo. or Amer. edit. 8vo.
Pickering's Vocabulary of Americanisms, 8vo.
Foster's Essays, 12mo.
Westminster Con. of Faith.
Campbell's Lectures on Syst. Theol. and Pulpit Eloquence, 8vo.
Young Minister's Companion, 8vo.
Young Preacher's Manual, 8vo.
Emmons' Sermons, 3 vols. 8vo.
Smalley's Sermons, 2 vols. 8vo.
Griffin's Park Street Lectures, 8vo.
Bates' Works, 2 vols. fol.
Gisborne's Sermons, 3 vols. 8vo.
Cooper's Sermons, 2 vols. 8vo.
Davies' Sermons, 5 vols. 8vo.
Walker's (Robert) Sermons, 4 vols. 8vo.
Jay's first vol.
Evans' Sermons on Christian temper.
Owen on 139th Psalm,—on Indwelling Sin, and on Spiritual mindedness.
Flavel's Works, 2 vols. fol.
John Newton's Works, 6 vols. 8vo.
Baxter's Practical Works.
Law's Serious Call, 12mo.
Wilberforce's Practical View, 12mo.
Thomas a Kempis, 8vo.

Pike's Cases of Conscience, 12mo.
Boston's Fourfold State, 12mo.
Doddridge's Rise and Progress, 12mo.
Leighton on 1 Peter, 2 vols. 8vo. All his works are good.
Campbell's Lectures on the Pastoral Office, 8vo.
Massillon's Charges, 8vo.
Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. 6 vols. 8vo.
Milner's Hist. of the Church, 5 vols. 8vo.
Prideaux' Connexion, 4 vols. 8vo.
Lowman's Heb. Ritual, 8vo.

Among the standard English works that might be useful to the young preacher in forming his style, may be reckoned,

Alison on Taste, 8vo.
Spectator, with preface, historical and biographical, by Chalmers, 10 vols. 12mo.
Johnson's Rambler, 3 vols. 12mo.
Beattie's Works, 10 vols. 12mo.
Milton's Paradise Lost, &c. 2 vols. 12mo.
Young's Night Thoughts, 12mo.
Cowper's Task, 12mo.
Pope's Poetical Works, 4 vols. 12mo.

A few general books of reference, are almost indispensable in the library of a preacher, as they often furnish him with important information when he most needs it, and with a small expense of time. Among these may be mentioned,

Lempriere's Biographical Dictionary, 2 vols. 8vo.
Classical Dictionary, 8vo.
Calmet's Dictionary of the Holy Bible, 4 vols. 4to.
Harmer's Observations, 4 vols. 8vo.
Wells' Geography, 2 vols. 8vo.
Burder's Oriental Customs, 2 vols. 8vo.
H. Adams's View of Religions, 8vo.
Gaston's Collections, 8vo.

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